

Title: Inside My Mind

Pairing: TMR/FemHP, George W/DM/FW, RW/?

Disclaimer: I do not own Harry Potter or the quotes. I also kind of took the quote idea from another story.

AU!

Inside My Mind

By: Sistersgrimmlover

Prologue

"One day at a time-this is enough.

Do not look back and grieve over the past for it is gone;

And do not be troubled about the future, for it has not yet come.

Live in the present, and make it so beautiful

It will be worth remembering"

Anonymous

The Potter House, Godric's Hollow, Great Britain

Saturday the 31st of October 1981

11:57 PM

Grindelwald walked slowly towards the room where the one who could kill him and his Heir was. He flicked his wand and the door slammed open and a woman with fiery red hair and glowing green eyes stared in horror. But her face was defiant and she clutched the baby in her arms closer to her body.

"Leave us alone!" Lily Potter demanded. She placed the baby in the crib and she turned around with her wand out. Grindelwald watched in mild surprise.

"Give me the child and I may spare you" Grindelwald prompted. Lily shook her head and bit her lip.

"Please...not Bella. Not Bella!" begged Lily. Grindelwald raised one eyebrow. So, the child was a girl. That had not been told to him. No matter...

"Stand aside you silly girl!" he commanded. Lily shook her head and her lip trembled. She slid her wand back into her pocket. She knew she was fighting a losing battle.

"No...kill me instead. Not Bella!" Lily said, becoming hysterical. Grindelwald raised his wand to face her.

"She's a danger to all that I've worked for" Grindelwald said, carefully not saying that he had an Heir. His Heir could come out after all threats were eliminated. Like this child.

"She's a baby...she's my baby. Please have mercy!" Lily sobbed. Grindelwald gave a laugh. It was short and dry before he shook his head.

"Avada Kedavra!" Grindelwald commanded. The inevitable green light sped to the Potter woman. She fell to the ground, dead. Grindelwald walked over her and went to the child. The baby was smiling, toothlessly.

She was a pretty thing. She had loose black hair that fell to her shoulders gracefully. And her eyes...they were too aware for a child her age. And they were the same apple green eyes as her mother.

"Goodbye child" Grindelwald said, in an ancient voice. The baby stood at his words and gripped the railing of the crib and lifted her head to look him straight in the eyes. The baby closed her eyes and smiled.

Grindelwald watched in sick fascination. The child knew she was to die. Somehow...

"Avada Kedavra."

And suddenly Grindelwald broke. And he was nothing more but...dust in the wind.

And a lightening bolt scar shone on the head of the girl standing there

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 1st of November, 1981

3:21 AM

Poppy Pomfrey cradled the child in her arms. The child was crying for her mother and she couldn't give her to her. Bella Potter snuggled closer to Poppy as she cried and cried and cried.

"Don't cry, child" urged Poppy but it seemed to make the Potter child cry even more. Bella sat up and wailed.

"Pafoot!" she wailed. Poppy frowned, not understanding. Suddenly, the Hospital Wing doors slammed open and a man stood there, his long black shoulder length hair at his shoulder. His grey eyes held so much pain but they slightly lit up when they settled on the girl in his arms. Another man stood with him but stood to the side.

"Bella!" Sirius Black said, breathing in relief. She hadn't been gotten. He had shown up at the Potter House to see his two best friends on the ground. Dead. And Bella missing.

He ran up to Poppy and grabbed the little girl out of her arms and hugged her tightly. Bella wrapped her arms around her godfather's neck and cried.

"It's okay, Bella. I'm here. I'm here. I promise I won't leave you ever again" Sirius said, to the baby. The man standing at the door looked only slightly amused. He walked forward from the shadows and Poppy jumped and clutched her chest.

"Oh! Tom...you scared me there. You should stop doing that" Poppy said, reproachfully. Tom Riddle Jr. smiled slightly. He ran a hand through his hair and crossed his arms.

"I apologize Poppy. Mr. Black, you may take your ward with you to my office" Tom said. Sirius nodded and held Bella close before following Tom to the Deputy Headmaster's office. Bella watched with wide and aware eyes. The man in front of her Padfoot was leading

them through twists and turns. They finally went to a portrait with a man with silver hair and the same charcoal eyes as Tom's.

"Open" hissed Tom. Sirius shivered at the sound of it but Bella looked, for a lack of a better word, determined. The portrait slid over to reveal an archway.

"Open" hissed Bella. Sirius jumped at the noise Bella made and Tom turned on his heel and looked at the little girl. She gave him what could only be described as a smirk. Tom couldn't help but give a slight smile.

The girl was talented. He could see why she would rival his power. Sirius looked down at his goddaughter.

"Did you do that, Bella? Or can Riddle throw his voice?" Sirius asked. Bella gurgled happily but didn't respond. She sat, not repeating what she said. The portrait, however, sneered.

"So a little girl was gifted with my speech" the portrait sniffed. Tom cast the portrait a look.

"Salazar...the girl destroyed Grindelwald. She must be powerful. The little Girl-Who-Lived" Tom said. Salazar Slytherin raised an eyebrow but said nothing more and Sirius walked hesitantly after Tom and they walked down a well-lit hallway.

"Why aren't we going to Dumbledore?" asked Sirius. Tom frowned at the name but said nothing against his boss and the Headmaster of Hogwarts.

"He is doing damage control. People have heard of the Girl-Who-Lived. Grindelwald is finally gone. He's been around for an awfully long time. People are ecstatic" Tom said, as if that was explanation enough. Sirius nodded in understanding. They made a sharp left and entered Tom's office.

It was simple, yet elegant. The desk was of ebony and the walls seemed to be made from obsidian. The seats were gold in color and looked comfortable. Tom sat down behind his desk and gestured for Sirius to sit down, across from him.

"Riddle, what exactly did you need from me? You show up at my house and tell me that my best friends are dead. What is it that you need?" Sirius asked, bluntly, shifting Bella to his lap. Bella watched with wide bright eyes as Tom began to finger his wand.

"Bella Potter needs a place to live. It is either you or her Muggle relatives. If you wish to adopt her you must go to Gringotts and blood adopt her. Dumbledore wishes to put her with her relatives. You must do this before he gets back" Tom said, bluntly. Sirius looked in surprise and his nose flared.

"What do you mean? I'm a perfectly good guardian!" Sirius protested. Tom sighed and shook his head.

"Yes, yes. I'm letting you know to help me and you're debating against me as if I wanted to put her with her relatives. In all honestly I could care less" Tom said, dismissively. Sirius nodded and stood up with Bella and shook his head.

"I have to go. Thank you, Riddle" Sirius said. Bella waved as they left, her eyes still focused on the wand in Tom's hand. Tom followed her gaze and raised an eyebrow. The little girl was focused on his wand.

"Interesting."

"Indeed..." said the portrait of Salazar in his office.

Chapter I

Number 12, Grimmauld Place, London, England, Great Britain

Tuesday the 31st of July 1991

9:00 AM

Bella Potter shot up from her bed with wide green eyes. Her hair was tangled in a mess, per usual, but she didn't even care enough to try and brush it. She stumbled over her long pajama pants. She looked in the mirror excitedly and smiled at her reflection. She wasn't tall and she wasn't short, she had red lips, pale skin that bordered on sickly pale, and wild black hair. The only thing that was above average, at least to her, were her eyes. They glowed green and she gave a wicked smirk, exposing white teeth.

She ran out of the room and ran down the stairs, towards the smell of eggs and bacon. As she stumbled into the kitchen, she almost tripped over the old house elf of the Blacks.

"Sorry, Kreacher!" Bella called over her shoulder as he glared at her. Kreacher's look softened at her apology.

"It is fine, Mistress" he sighed, continuing to clean imaginary dust. More likely, he didn't want to be in the same room as Sirius.

"Uh...Kreacher, it's my birthday. Can you make me a treacle tart before I go to Diagon Alley?" asked Bella excitedly. Kreacher nodded.

"Of course, Mistress."

Bella grinned and took off towards the kitchen before walking and grinning. Sirius sat at the table with a large platter of bacon, eggs, and sausages.

"Well, if it isn't the birthday girl. How old are you again? Seven?" Sirius teased. Bella rolled her eyes and launched herself at the man.

"Uncle Sirius! I'm eleven!" laughed Bella, hugging her beloved godfather. Sirius hugged her back, squeezing her tightly.

"That's right! You're a big girl. You're going to get your wand and go to Hogwarts. Now let's eat. I'm starving and we're meeting someone at the Leaky Cauldron" Sirius said. Bella nodded and began shoveling food into her mouth as quickly as possible. Sirius stared in shock.

"Bella...you're going to choke! Calm down" Sirius insisted. Bella sighed and swallowed what was in her mouth, sharply.

"Sssorry" Bella hissed. Sirius frowned, slightly at the sound but said nothing of it. He began to eat some of the eggs as well.

"So where do you want to go first, Doe?" Sirius asked, using her nickname. Bella didn't even need to think about it.

"I want to get my wand" she said, firmly. Sirius nodded and grinned.

"Of course. How else are you going to get into trouble?" smirked Sirius. Bella laughed and shook her head.

"Uncle Sirius...I don't think it's good that I should know that I'm going to pull pranks before I even get there. But I guess I could pull one in the name of the Marauders. I'm finally eleven! I can do so many things with a wand" Bella said, lovingly, her eyes glazed over as she thought about the magic pulsing through her, ready to be released. Sirius rolled her eyes at her dramatic act.

They continued to chat about Diagon Alley and Hogwarts while they ate breakfast and Bella stood.

"I have to go shower. I can already tell you did" Bella said. Sirius nodded in agreement before looking at the dishes.

"I'll wash them. You go upstairs and take a shower."

Bella agreed and ran upstairs before walking in her own personal bathroom. As she stepped into the steaming shower, she relaxed. The hot water hit her hair, making it fall straight to her waist and sticking flat on her hair. She showered for a half hour before stepping out and dressing.

She slid on black slacks that suddenly stuck her legs, becoming slightly like a second skin and a white blouse. She pulled on her

Chuck Taylor sneakers before pulling on her bottle green cloak. She pulled her long black hair into a half ponytail before walking out of her room, ready to leave.

"Uncle Sirius! Come on!" she shouted when she walked into the Drawing Room but didn't see him there. As she called said uncle walked in with his black cloak. Sirius smirked and held out the cauldron of Floo Powder. Bella grabbed it and stepped inside the fireplace.

"Leaky Cauldron!" Bella commanded, as she threw down the powder.

Leaky Cauldron, London, England

Tuesday the 31st of July 1991

10:04 AM

Green flames erupted around her as she spun before stumbling out of the fireplace at the Leaky Cauldron. All eyes were on her and suddenly there was a scream.

"IT'S BELLA POTTER! IT'S THE GIRL-WHO-LIVED!"

"Fuck..." Bella sighed, as people rushed towards her. She heard her uncle come through from behind her but he was just as shocked as her. A tall figure stepped in front of Bella. He was much taller than her, around six feet.

"Such vulgar language for a little girl, Miss Potter" the voice said. Bella stared at the figure in wonder.

"I know you..." she trailed off. He looked back at her with charcoal and garnet flecked eyes.

"Indeed you do. Away with all of you. Give the child space. She is not a circus act for you to gawk at" the man said, decisively. People skulked away, obviously not happy at the man but they didn't dare challenge him. The man turned around and smirked down at Bella.

Bella couldn't help but stare and smirk back. The man was tall with silky dark hair that reached his shoulder blades. His hair was so black it had blue highlights and was pulled back in a ponytail. He was pale with an aristocratic nose and he was incredibly handsome.

"I am Professor Tom Riddle, the Deputy Headmaster of Hogwarts and the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher" Tom hissed. Bella nodded and he offered a hand. She took it and shook it firmly.

"Pleasure...I am Bella Potter" Bella hissed back. She couldn't help but notice there was an undertone of hisses and Sirius looked worried again.

"Hmm...I believe we should go into the Alley now" Tom said, firmly. Sirius nodded in agreement and Bella dropped her professor's hand as if it burned. Sirius grabbed Bella by the shoulders. Bella looked at her Uncle Sirius. He looked slightly paler than his normal tan. And his grey eyes showed that he was slightly worried.

But what about?

"Riddle, how have you been these past 10 years?" asked Sirius, tentatively as they walked to the backroom behind the Leaky Cauldron. The bartender nodded at them but his eyes remained on Bella.

"Teaching. Paperwork. Sending letters to children about Hogwarts. The like" Tom said, in clipped sentences. He seemed rather annoyed at that and Bella cleared her throat. They both looked at her, the charcoal eyes, expectant, and the grey eyes were confused.

"Do you not like teaching? Professor?" asked Bella, curiously. Tom gave her a look from underneath long lashes that she couldn't decipher. Tom shrugged and took out his yew wand. As soon as Bella saw it, she shuddered, feeling the core of the wand calling to her. She raised her hand, as if to take it before brushing her loose hair behind her ear.

"I like teaching" Tom said, without further explanation. The crimson in his eyes flashed and Bella stood entranced. He turned away to open the way to Diagon Alley. Sirius and Bella exchanged looks before Sirius shrugged. Tom walked, quickly through Diagon Alley, not stopping.

"We must go to Gringotts, first. I am to withdraw something rather important and I believe Miss Potter should have a blood lineage test" Tom said. Bella opened her mouth to protest.

"But I want my wand!"

"You have no right to say where we're going first. I'm her guardian!"

Tom turned to glare at the both of them. Sirius backed down as his eyes flashed crimson again. Bella's instincts told her to back down but her heart said different. She glared back.

"I'm not afraid of you!" Bella snapped. Tom grimaced at the girl's impertinence and he sighed. It came out as a hiss.

"You should be, Miss Potter. You don't want to make me hate you before you've even come to Hogwarts" Tom said, his voice colored with annoyance. Bella lifted her head and stared at him, sullenly. Tom opened the way to Diagon Alley and the temporary trio walked through.

Diagon Alley, London, Great Britain

Tuesday the 31st of July 1991

10:11 AM

Bella ignored the looks and whispers everyone cast her as she walked past. She glared, sullenly at Tom. She couldn't figure this out. She knew she had met him when she was little. She had been very aware when she a child and she understood how to do things quicker than most because she could remember people doing them from long ago.

But what was it about this teacher?

He was weird and she got a vibe from him that he didn't understand. They made their way to Gringotts and as soon as they stepped on the marble staircase someone grabbed her hand and shook sharply.

"Miss Potter, welcome!" cried out a little wizard. He looked scruffy and dirty with yellow teeth and grey hair. She stared in shock as he

prepared to kiss her hand as the proper wizarding gentleman. Sirius prepared to say something when Bella was jerked back by her wrist and pulled behind a tall figure.

"Oh Bella...why didn't you move? You shouldn't let strangers touch you. Some are out to get you" sighed Sirius. Bella barely heard him. Her eyes were on Tom Riddle who was whispering something harshly to the wizard. The wizard paled, considerably and glanced at Bella.

"Don't even look at her" Tom hissed, threateningly. The wizard stumbled away and gave a stumbling and low bow to Bella.

"I'm sorry for bothering you, Miss S...Potter" he said, quietly. Tom smirked and looked back at the shocked Bella and rolled his eyes.

"Not afraid of me, one of the greatest wizards on the face of the planet but absolutely terrified of a street rat. Pitiful, Miss Potter. Absolutely so" Tom smirked. Bella glared and lifted her head up.

"I'm not going to respond to that. Perhaps I will once I learn if you can get detentions before you enter Hogwarts" Bella snapped before walking inside. Tom watched as she suddenly adopted the air of a respectful yet no doubt pureblood Heiress.

"Welcome to Gringotts, Miss Potter. I am Gornhorg" the goblin teller in front of her said. She nodded and curtsied. Sirius watched with an air of pride.

"She knows how to act around goblins?" Tom asked, with mild surprise. Sirius seemed to take offense.

"I've taught her how to be the perfect Heiress. I doubt I will ever have a child. She is to be my Heiress. That is why I was mildly surprised that she seemed to be constantly snapping at you. You antagonize her" Sirius said, pointing out the obvious. Tom gave a slight smile.

"Perhaps..."

"Merry meet, Gornhorg" Bella said. Gornhorg was openly surprised before he blinked and bowed his head.

"Merry meet, Miss Potter. Now how may I help you?" Gornhorg asked, less cold now. Bella cast a gaze at Tom who walked over, gracefully. The goblin's eyes widened in shock.

"Lord Slytherin. My Lord, what may I do for you?" asked Gornhorg, bowing even lower for Tom. Bella stared at Tom with wide eyes and Tom placed a hand on Bella's shoulder.

"Miss Potter would like a blood test. The most expensive that lists each house, please. Be sure to hand the list, directly to me before she even sees it" Tom instructed. Gornhorg nodded.

"Griphook, Head of the Blood Lineage department will conduct the test for you. This test is rather expensive..." Gornhorg trailed off. Tom sighed, annoyed and he silenced Gornhorg with a look.

"Charge it to the Black vault" Sirius spoke up. Gornhorg nodded once. He turned around and cleared his throat. He stood up and opened the door beside the teller booth. People watched in curiosity.

"This way" he said, leading them to a backroom where a stone bowl and ceremonial knife. A goblin sat behind the bowl. Bella swallowed at how sharp the knife looked.

"Professor...is this really necessary?" asked Bella, uncertainly. Tom turned around, sharply and placed one long and pale finger under her chin and lifted her head, inspecting her face.

"I believe it is..." he trailed off, before spinning, his black robes swishing with him. He sat down and gestured both the Black and Potter forward. The goblin behind the table bowed to Tom.

"Lord Slytherin. And this is Miss Potter? And Mr. Black?" the goblin asked. Sirius gave a smile and nodded.

"Hello, Griphook. Merry meet" Sirius said.

"Merry meet. Now, Miss Potter, sit down and cut your dominant arm's wrist. Drop blood into the bowl and I will handle the rest" Griphook said. Bella nodded and looked at Sirius.

"Do I really have to do this?" she asked in distaste. Tom rolled his eyes and grabbed her right arm and mercilessly slashed down, cutting the skin.

"AH! Shit! He said cut! Not try to freaking cut off my hand" Bella snarled. Tom chuckled.

"You're being overdramatic, Miss Potter. Drop your blood in" Tom said. Bella glowered at him before dripping her blood into the bowl. Griphook placed a piece of parchment and drowned it in the parchment before taking it out. Griphook frowned and waved Tom over.

Tom paled noticeably and glanced at Bella who looked curious. Sirius frowned and waved his wand over Bella's arm, clumsily healing it.

"Well...uh...oh shit. Give me that" Tom snapped, snatching the parchment and shaking his head.

"Lord Slytherin...it isn't that bad..." Griphook said, uneasily. Tom snorted and inspected the parchment again.

"Remove all of that. And check it again. That...can be left there. That one House. But everything else that isn't directly hers...remove it" Tom instructed. Griphook snapped his finger and Tom nodded, satisfied.

"If I make ask, Lord Slytherin, how did this happen?" asked Griphook. Tom shook his head.

"I don't know. Bella, you may look" Tom said, handing the parchment to her. Bella looked at him suspiciously.

"What did you remove?" she demanded. Tom gave a strained half-smile.

"Nothing..." he trailed off. Bella looked down and gaped in shock at the parchment.

Heir to the House of Potter

Heir to the House of Gryffindor

Blood Heir to the House of Black

Heir to the House of Merlin

Magical Heir to the House of Slytherin (After Heir Apparent)

Blood Status: Half-blood

Soul Bond Status: Bonded

Soul Bond: Unconfirmed (Unconsummated)

"She's soul bonded?" Sirius hissed. Griphook nodded and cleared his throat. Bella frowned at the idea. She knew what it mean but she didn't understand how it had happened.

"It happened, unconsciously, when she was younger, I'd like to believe" Tom said, smoothly. Sirius hissed under his breath and sighed, knowing there was nothing he could do.

Ollivander's, Diagon Alley, London, England, Great Britain

Tuesday the 31st of July 1991

11:30 AM

Bella rubbed her temples as she ignored her Uncle's rants. He had been complaining since they had left Gringotts. After Tom picked up whatever the hell he had wanted from Gringotts, he had wanted to go to Flourish & Blotts. At that point, Bella hadn't cared. When they had been at the bookstore, she had abandoned her Uncle Sirius to speak with Tom about Hogwarts.

But, now they were at the place she'd wanted to come to since earlier this morning. As she stepped inside the small and cramped little shop. She looked around at the tall cases of boxes. She could feel the magic swirling in the shop.

"I was wondering when I would see you Miss Potter."

Bella jumped and looked up to see a white haired wizard looking down at her from a ladder. He jumped down, nimbly and made his way over. He noticed both Tom and Sirius.

"Ah...Mr. Riddle. I remember giving your wand to you. A long time ago..." Ollivander said. Bella looked at him in shock.

"How old are you? You must be ancient..." Bella said, smirking. Tom glared down at her and looked away.

"Older than you. You shut up" he snapped. Bella laughed, behind her hand.

"Yes, yes. Yew, 13 ½ inches, and phoenix feather if I'm correct. And Mr. Black, ebony, dragon heartstring, 12 ½ inch" Ollivander said. They both nodded. Ollivander stood and looked around the shop before pulling down a box and opening it.

"Ash, 10 inch, unicorn hair" Ollivander dictated. Bella took it and gave a swift slash. The glass mirrors in the shop shattered. Ollivander took the wand, quickly.

"Oops..." she giggled.

"No, no. Definitely not."

And with that Ollivander went through almost every wand for an hour. Tom sighed, leaning against the wall, reading the book he had got from Flourish & Blotts. He looked up when he felt Ollivander's eyes on him. Suddenly, Ollivander's lips spread into a knowing smile. Tom paled.

"I see...Bella. I believe I have the perfect wand for you. Holly, 10 inches, phoenix feather" Ollivander said, giving said wand to her. Bella looked at it warily.

"Mr. Ollivander, you said that about the last few..." she trailed off. The wand pulsed in her hands, violently. Tom shook and pulled out his own. It was pulsing, just as violently. Golden threads erupted from both wands and emerald and silver erupted from Tom's wand. A barrage of colors erupted from Bella's. The most dominant color was charcoal and crimson.

"Ollivander...what's happening?" asked Sirius in alarm. Ollivander smiled, quietly to himself.

"The wands are rejoicing" was his simple answer. Tom looked down at the connected wands and tried to jerk his own wand away. The connection stayed and with his struggle became even stronger. Bella stared in wonder and the numerous colors turned to brightly colored flames. Suddenly, it ended and the connection broke. They stared down in shock at their wands.

"That...most definitely is your wand. Curious. Very curious" Ollivander said. Bella turned around to face the wandmaker.

"What's curious?" she asked. Tom stowed his wand away.

"Your wand's core is a phoenix feather. That phoenix gave another feather. Just one other. It's curious that you should have that wand when Mr. Riddle's wand contains the other. The wands are rejoicing because they are together once again. It will do you well not to turn your wands on each other unless you wish for them to rejoice again...or destroy. Should anything threaten the other wand, the wand which isn't being threatened will attack on it's own" Ollivander explained. Sirius nodded in understanding.

"This is an interesting development" Sirius said. Tom's face looked absolutely sour and he crossed his arms.

"No it isn't" he snapped before glaring at Ollivander. Ollivander smiled, benignly. Tom hissed under his breath.

"That will be nine galleons" Ollivander said. Sirius opened his mouth before Tom sighed.

"Charge it to the Slytherin account. She's the second Heir anyway" Tom said, before storming away. Bella sighed and smiled at Ollivander.

"Thank you, sir!" she said. Sirius nodded before the pair walked out of the shop.

"Goodbye Lord and Lady Slytherin."

Madam Malkin's, Diagon Alley, London, England, Great Britain

Tuesday the 31st of July 1991

11:45 AM

"I'm so hungry..." whined Bella as she stood in Madam Malkin's. Tom glared at her and sighed.

"Miss Potter, if you'd refrain from whining, that would be absolutely amazing" Tom said, sarcastically. Bella hissed at him before Madam Malkin approached. She pulled her over.

"Miss Potter! Come this way!" insisted Madam Malkin, pulling her to a backroom where she was instructed to remove her cloak. She looked to the side to see a girl with big bushy brown hair and big front teeth.

"Hello, are you going to Hogwarts?" the girl asked. Bella turned to look at her in surprise and nodded. The girl looked friendly and Bella extended her hand over to her.

"I'm Bella. Bella Potter" Bella said. The girl's mouth fell open and she extended her hand, excitedly.

"I'm Hermione! Hermione Granger! I've read all about you. You're the Girl-Who-Lived. You destroyed Grindelwald when you were just a baby!" Hermione said, excitedly. Bella smiled, amusedly.

"Nice to meet you. I've read all about me as well. They aren't very accurate. I don't have any special powers" Bella reassured the girl. Hermione blushed.

"So...if you're Bella Potter, that means you're a pureblood. Why are you talking to me?" asked Hermione. Bella laughed fully and Hermione ducked her head before giving a small smile.

"I'm not a pureblood. You're a Muggleborn, right? My mum was a Muggleborn. You're only a pureblood if your grandparents were purebloods" Bella explained. Hermione nodded and Madam Malkin began measuring the two girls. Bella and Hermione were soon finished and exited together with a barrage of robes and skirts and

shirts. Sirius and Tom looked up as she exited and Bella's wand began to vibrate again.

"Could you control your magic please?" Tom snapped as she exited. Bella grabbed her wand, tightly and glared at him.

"With all due respect, Professor, could you shut up?" Bella snarled. Tom smirked at her, almost approvingly and Hermione looked between the two.

"Professor...Bella..." Hermione said, questioningly. She beckoned her parents forward who were accompanied by a tall man with mounds of hair, on top of his head and on his face.

"ello ther', Tom" said Hagrid with a slightly sour look on his face. Tom nodded towards Hagrid.

"Hello Bella" Hagrid said with a wink. Bella smiled, uncertainly at the tall and strange man.

"Hello, Miss Granger. I am Professor Tom Riddle" Tom said. Hermione was starry-eyed even after they left.

Floean Fortescue's Ice Cream Parlour, Diagon Alley, London, England, Great Britain

Tuesday the 31st of July 1991

12:15 AM

"Hmm...a banana spilt would be awesome!" Bella decided. Mr. Fortescue smiled at her and nodded. Bella swung her legs, under the table and refrained from kicking Tom who was reading his enormous book again.

"An ice cream float...those are delicious. Especially, here. Ooh caramel flavored with butterbeer" Sirius requested. Mr. Fortescue laughed.

"Sirius Black. You used to come at all possible times. I think I should know your order after 20 some years" Mr. Fortescue insisted. Sirius joined in and Mr. Fortescue turned to Tom.

"And you Mr. Riddle?" he asked. Tom didn't even look up from his book as he responded.

"Vanilla, strawberry, chocolate. Topped with bananas, cherries, any nuts you have, and hot fudge. Add whipped cream and then drizzle it was caramel sauce and finish it with rainbow sprinkles" Tom said, without skipping a beat or looking up from his book. Mr. Fortescue nodded.

"Ooh...so the usual" Mr. Fortescue said. Tom looked up, finally and gave a slow smirk before nodding at the wonder on Sirius' and Bella's faces. Bella leaned back and closed her eyes and settled in what was somewhat silence. She drifted to sleep, leaning against the wall.

She was floating over the battlefield. A woman stood next to a tall man with burning blood eyes. His face was shadowed over. The woman had long thick black hair, flying around her crazily. She cackled as she shot another Killing Curse to her left.

The dark angel of a woman laughed as she looked at the slain bodies. The man next to her wrapped his arms around her waist and pulled her closer and tilted her head up with a familiar long finger...

Sirius poked her in the side and she woke up with a vengeance. She glared at him with slitted green eyes.

"What the hell do you want?" she hissed. Sirius jumped and leaned back. Sirius cleared his throat. Tom watched the interaction in amusement.

"She said 'What the hell do you want?'" Tom clarified. Bella turned on her soon to be teacher and glared.

"And why the hell doesn't he know what I said?" demanded Bella. Mr. Fortescue came with the ice cream and Tom began eating, reading his book.

"You were speaking in Parseltongue. I speak it since I'm the Heir Apparent. You're the second Heir...Heiress of Salazar Slytherin. I don't know how but you are" Tom clarified.

"That's why I remember you! You...you were the man who got me from the house when I was little. You came with that big hairy man. Hagrid, I believe. I said my first Parseltongue word after you said it" Bella said. Tom raised an eyebrow and smirked and shoveled more ice cream into his mouth.

"Glad to know that I am such a good role model on children, Miss Potter" Tom said. Bella gave an amused look.

"I'm sorry that you go that misconception, Professor."

How'd you like that chapter?

Next Chapter: Hogwarts Express, Malfoys, Hogwarts, the Sorting and an encounter with Weasleys

Chapter II

Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$, Kings Cross, London, England, Great Britain

Sunday the 1st of September 1991

10:45 AM

"Uncle Sirius! I'm going to be late!" shouted Bella as they walked quickly to the Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$. In her hand was a cage with pure white snow owl she had named Hedwig. Sirius was pulling her trunk rather slowly. They approached the platform and stopped right in front of it, letting a family of redhead through. There was a pair of twins, a tall boy with curly red hair and gleaming badge with a 'P' on it. And then there was boy who looked her age with red hair. And finally, there was another set of twins, one girl and one boy who looked slightly sad.

Bella instantly knew they were the Weasleys.

"Go on, go on. Fred, you next" the short redhead said, looking at one of the older twins and gestured forward.

"He's not Fred! I am!" said one of them. The other laughed and shook their head.

"Honestly, woman! You call yourself our mother..." sighed the other. Bella watched, interested.

"Sorry, George" the mother said. The one who was the one who had berated the mother laughed.

"I'm only kidding, Mum. I am Fred" he said, running through the barrier. He disappeared from view. Sirius approached and tapped the mother on the shoulder. She turned around and gave a wide smile.

"Sirius! And...oh. This is your goddaughter, Bella Potter!" Mrs. Weasley said. Bella nodded and gave a small smile, rubbing her scar, self-consciously. The remaining kids except for the pompous looking one openly ogled at her. The little boy that looked a year younger than her blushed when she looked at him and she frowned.

"Hi..." Bella trailed off. Mrs. Weasley patted her shoulder, maternally and Bella's smile widened.

"You look so nervous, dear. I'm sure that you'll do fine. Ron is starting this year as well. Go on through" Mrs. Weasley said. Bella nodded and she felt her wand pulse and grabbed it and she jerked.

"What's wrong? Is he near?" asked Sirius, his face souring at the thought of the owner of the yew wand that matched her own wand. The Weasleys watched in interest and she shook her head.

"Uh...no. My wand just senses that the other wand is getting nearer. It isn't fully under my control yet so it still is a little...anxious" Bella said. The Weasleys looked away before they went through the barrier one by one. Bella gestured towards the barrier, indicating for Sirius to go first, with her wand. Sirius quirked a grin and she looked at him curiously.

"Oh don't be so...Riddle-ish" Sirius said. Bella glared at him and couldn't seem to understand why she glared when he used what would surely be her favorite yet least favorite professor as an insult.

"Shut up. Can we go now?" demanded Bella. Sirius nodded and they walked up to the platform before going in effortlessly. Everyone watched as she walked in, her eyes flashing. She caught sight of a family of blonds and Sirius' lip curled.

"Ugh...the Malfoys. My cousin, Narcissa, is decent but her husband and son are idiots. Watch out for him" Sirius warned. Bella nodded.

"I will. Uncle Sirius, I'm going to miss you" Bella said, quietly. Sirius' face became slightly forlorn as they looked at the scarlet train. He patted her on the top of her head.

"I'll miss you too. If you decide to stay at Hogwarts for Christmas I'll even come by to see you. I promise. Bella..." trailed off Sirius. Bella looked at him in confusion and she grabbed her uncle's hand.

"What's wrong?" asked Bella. Sirius shook his head and gave a sad little laugh, completely different from his loud and rambunctious laugh. Bella looked at him in worry.

"You look so much like James. But you have Lily's eyes. And her nose. That nose is definitely not James'. Too delicate. And you have Lily's 20-20 vision, too" Sirius murmured. Bella smiled and wrapped Sirius in a hug and he hugged her back tightly. The train gave a warning whistle and Bella looked up.

"I have to go, Uncle Sirius. Don't worry about me. I have a feeling Professor Riddle will be looking after me" Bella smirked. Sirius hugged the Potter girl tightly and kissed her on the top of her head.

"I'm gonna miss you, Doe" Sirius said, quietly. Bella pulled away and gave a smirk and crossed her arms.

"And I'll miss you, Padfoot. Bye..." Bella said. Sirius kissed the top of her head before letting her go. Bella walked away, backwards and blew another kiss at Sirius. She hopped on the train and walked down the aisles when she found an empty one. She sat down and curled into the seat and fingered her wand.

She thought about the dream she had had on her birthday. The dream foreshadowed something and she knew the people in the dream. But she couldn't for the life of her remember their names. And she knew it was important. She could barely remember the dream itself. She remembered the insane cackling and the green curses flying over people's heads. Even hitting some...

She shuddered as she thought of it. She shook her head and cleared her throat when she heard the compartment door opening. She looked up from the floor and saw Fred, George, and Ron Weasley standing in the doorway.

"Can we sit here?" asked Fred, or who she thought was Fred anyway.

"Our friend isn't around" the other twin said. That was George, if she remembered correctly.

"And since he's not around—"

"We made it our mission to find—"

"Ickle Ron some friends" finished Fred. Bella couldn't help but laugh and she waved them in. Ron watched her with a dumbstruck

expression and she frowned. The train took off and he stumbled towards her, almost falling on her. Suddenly, her wand reacted and it pulsed, making her slash her hand down. He flew away from her and into the seat away from her.

"Oh shit! I'm so sorry. My wand...it's really excited to meet its brother. I'm sorry! My wand...it did it on it's own accord" Bella stammered. The three Weasleys didn't seem to be listening to her. They were staring at her wonder.

"Bloody hell! That was amazing. You're Bella Potter, of course! You defeated Grindelwald. You're amazing!" Ron said, excitedly. Bella blushed and looked down before stowing her wand in her pocket. Fred and George seemed to be mulling over her words.

"Yeah...I supposed I did" Bella said, uncertainly. She bit her lip, unsure of how to react. She didn't even know how to do this. Sirius hadn't exactly let her into the Wizarding World all to much and when they did go shopping for supplies they usually Flooed to France to avoid this.

"Can we see your scar?" Fred asked. Bella nodded, good-naturedly. She lifted her bangs and exposed her scar and the three ogled at it. She couldn't help but feel slightly self-conscious and she flattened her bangs over her forehead again.

"Do you remember anything from that night?" Ron asked. Bella paused and closed her eyes. Of course, she didn't remember anything. She was just a baby.

No...she had remembered one person. One man.

"I do. Professor Riddle. I remember Professor Riddle" Bella said, firmly. Fred and George paused and Ron looked confused. She glanced between the two twins in confusion. She cleared her throat, in the awkward silence.

"You know Professor Riddle? He hates all Gryffindors but he doesn't show it. We all know he hates the Gryffindors. But he's never unfair in class with points and stuff. He only gives detentions when you deserve it. But he makes remarks about us all the time. And you look like a Gryffindor" George said, his brows furrowed. Bella's lips spread into an indecipherable smile and she shook her head.

"You know something we don't obviously" Fred decided after she didn't say anything for a few moments. She shrugged with an innocent look on her face. She'd enjoy taunting these two. Suddenly, the twins stood up and grabbed their trunks.

"I think we're going to look for our friend now. See you later, Bella" George said. Bella waved.

"Bye George. Bye Fred" she called after them as they left. Fred turned around with a wickedly innocent smile on his face.

"Oh and take care of Ronnie-kins for us. And Ron...you have dirt on your nose" Fred said before walking away. Bella laughed out loud as Ron turned red around the neck and his ears flamed.

"Ignore those prats. What do you mean Professor Riddle? How do you remember him? Who is he?" asked Ron. Suddenly, the compartment door slid open and Bella's smile brightened when she caught sight of who it was.

"Have any of you seen a toad...Bella!" Hermione Granger cried out. Bella grinned and stood, walking over purposefully. She hugged Hermione tightly before backing away.

"Hello, Hermione. This is Ron Weasley. I was about to tell him about Professor Riddle" Bella said. Hermione's eyes brightened at the opportunity to learn about her soon to be teacher.

"Let's hear it then" Hermione said, swiftly. Bella nodded and leaned forward, dramatically. Her long black hair spilled down her back, elegantly. She looked everything like a dark Fallen angel in that moment. Hermione and Ron stared shell-shocked before she straightened and the darkness faded.

"So...the night my parents died. I remember nothing. Except for Professor Riddle. Riddle is the Deputy Headmaster and the Headmaster in Dumbledore's absence. He's also the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. When I met him I was only one. That night I tried to take his wand I think. His wand is my wand's brother wand" explained Bella. Hermione's eyes widened.

"That's the second time you talked about a brother wand. What is it?" Ron asked, curiosity coloring his voice. Bella opened her mouth to explain when Hermione sat up, her face turning stern as if she was about to lecture.

"Well brother wands are very rare. Most magical animals only give one core. But a selective few give two of their attributes. For example, some unicorns may give two hairs instead of one. If they are both set into a wand that have compatible woods they become brother wands. What is your wand core?" asked Hermione said, in a matter-of-fact voice that could easily be mistaken for a know-it-all voice. Ron seemed to take it as the latter and he grimaced.

"Phoenix feather. Holly. 10 inches. His is yew, phoenix feather, 13 ½ inches. Apparently, if we use our wands on each other our wands get a mind of their own and either rejoice or destroy. When they rejoice it's pretty cool" Bella said, commenting on the barrage of colors and fire she had seen when their wands had connected.

"That's interesting. Bella do you know how to do any spells yet? I've read our entire Transfiguration textbook and I know all the theories" Hermione said. Ron's eyes narrowed and Bella's eyes widened. He was being ignored and apparently he absolutely despised it.

"I know a spell. Fred and George taught it to me" Ron said, sounding as if he was imitating Hermione's slightly haughty voice. The bushy haired girl's eyes narrowed and she glared at him.

"Well, let's see it then."

Ron glared at her for accepting the challenge he had made and Bella watched in amusement. Ron lifted his wand and withdrew a rat. Bella raised an eyebrow at it and Ron pointed his wand at it.

"Sunshine, daisies, butter mellow, turn this stupid, fat rat yellow!" Ron shouted. Bella swallowed her snicker and Hermione looked disappointed and a little annoyed at his efforts. Hermione stood and turned and walked towards the door.

"Are you sure that's a real spell? Well it's not very good, is it? I've tried out a few simple spells just for practice and they've all worked for me. Nobody has magic in my family at all and it was such a surprise when I got my letter. But after I got around to believing it, I

was very pleased. And then Hagrid came and escorted my parents and I to Diagon Alley. I got all my textbooks from Flourish & Blotts and they were so interesting. I've learned them all by heart. Anyway, I've got to help Neville find his toad. You better change into your robes. We'll be getting there soon, I suspect. Goodbye for now, Bella" Hermione said before leaving. Ron glared after her. Bella sat in surprise.

She hadn't know anyone could talk that much and so fast in one breath. But she already knew one thing. Hermione was most definitely going to be the brightest witch in their year. Ron seemed to agree. He responded most angrily.

"Blood know-it-all. I hope I'm not in the same house as she is."

"What house do you hope to go to?" asked Bella. Ron tilted his head.

"Gryffindor. Mum and Dad were in that house and so are the rest of my brothers. I don't know what they'll say if I don't go. Ravenclaw wouldn't be too bad but...Slytherin..." trailed off Ron.

"What's wrong with Slytherin?" asked Bella, curiously. She wanted to hear about it from Ron's point of view. She already knew about the houses from Sirius but she wanted to hear from Ron.

"Well everyone knows that Slytherins are the most evil wizards of all. Merlin forbid I go there..." Ron said.

Secretly, Bella hoped she didn't get in either.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 1st of September 1991

7:45 PM

Bella stood, excited as the train stopped and she smoothed her skirt. She wore a grey skirt and a white short-sleeved shirt with a white sweater vest. Knee high grey socks covered her legs and black lace up boots covered her legs up to her shin. Finally she wore a long black fitting robe with white buckles. Her tie was white as well; ready to change as soon as she was Sorted. Ron wore grey pants, a

short-sleeved white shirt, a sweater vest, open robes and black loafers.

"It's time to go. We leave our trunks on" Ron said. Bella nodded and the two exited the train. They looked around at the busy platform. The older students were making their way to the side where there were horseless carriages.

"First' yers! Firs' years ove' her'!" shouted a voice. Bella looked up at the familiar voice and saw Hagrid towering over all of the other students and even the seventh years. Bella and Ron wandered over and Hagrid smile at Bella with his black beetle eyes and Bella couldn't help but smile back.

"Hello Hagrid" she said, quietly. Hagrid smiled at her.

"How you ther' Bella?" asked Hagrid. Bella nodded and tilted her head and sighed, quietly.

"I'm a little worried is all" Bella answered. Hagrid grinned before turning to all the first years.

"Fir to a boa'!" commanded Hagrid. Bella slid into a boat with Ron and two Indian girls sat with them. They smiled at them but said nothing. They were too nervous. The boats took off and Bella looked up to see the most beautiful piece of architecture she had ever seen in her life.

It was a castle with glowing windows and towers. The largest tower seemed to have the largest window and Bella felt the pulsing magic. It radiated from the core of the school and she closed her eyes, blissful in the feel of the magic. A familiar magic called out to her but she couldn't place it.

They landed soon and Hagrid escorted the children into the Entrance Hall. And standing there was the handsome Tom Riddle. The first year girls giggled and blushed as they looked at them. His eyes were searching over them and they landed on Bella Potter. Their gazes locked and smirks spread on both of their faces. Ron stared and leaned over to speak when Tom glared at him to keep his mouth shut.

"I am Professor Riddle. You will be Sorted to one of the four houses. There are four houses, as I've just stated. Ravenclaw. Hufflepuff. Gryffindor. And Slytherin" Tom started, giving Bella a sly look who raised an eyebrow at the challenge. He was banking on her being accepted into Slytherin. Ha...she'd show him.

"I will be back for you once we are ready for you. Keep silent. When I come back I'd appreciate it if you didn't speak. Thank you" Tom concluded before slipping through the double doors. Almost immediately everyone began to speak. Bella was tapped on the shoulder and she turned around.

A boy with pale blonde hair and silver eyes stood in front of her, flanked with two thick boys that were her age. And Bella could identify the arrogant looking boy in front of her.

"Draco Malfoy" Bella said. Draco nodded and swept into a low bow. Bella looked at him in surprise and Ron sneered at the boy.

"Lady Slytherin. Pleasure..." Draco said. Bella's eyes widened and suddenly her wand was in hand and she held it out at Draco's throat. She looked around, making sure no one heard the title except for Ron. Ron was looking at her with wide eyes.

"Speak of that title to no one, Malfoy. I don't want it publically known. How do you know anyway? Who're your friends?" hissed Bella. Draco raised a delicate and pale eyebrow.

"My father of course. And this is Crabbe and Goyle" Draco said, gesturing to each of them. Bella nodded to each and cleared her throat.

"I see. I'd greatly appreciate it if you didn't refer to me as that. There is already a Lord Slytherin. I do not actually have the title. I'm not even really related. I'm only magically the next to assume the title" Bella said, firmly. From what Sirius had told her, being a Slytherin was bad. All of them were gits. And of course, Sirius had used Tom as an example.

"Fine, Potter. You should know that as a young lady of your caliber, the Heiress to the House of Black and Slytherin that there are better families to associate with. Like my own" Draco said. Bella sniffed and crossed her arms.

"You shut your mouth Malfoy" Ron snapped before Bella could respond. Draco turned on him with narrowed eyes.

"Red hair, freckles, and hand me down robes. You must be a Weasley. See, what I'm saying Potter...you're to inherit the two Darkest families just like me. You don't want to make friends with the wrong sort. I could help you there," Draco said, extending his hand. Bella moved his hand with her wand and raised an eyebrow.

"I don't think so. Thanks for the invitation but I can pick my own friends. And Ron's one of them. I already have a good idea of who the 'wrong sort' are" Bella said, coolly, her eyes betraying her emotions. She was absolutely furious at the arrogance and prejudice of the boy in front of her.

Draco's eyes narrowed and he seized her wrist. She looked at him in surprise. She didn't think he'd resort to physical means.

"Unless you're polite, Potter, I'm sure you'll go the same way as your parents, no matter what your title is" Draco snapped, his mask of kindness slipping off. Bella tried to jerk away from him when a hand rested on her shoulder and Draco let go of her as if shocked.

"Tut, tut, Miss Potter. Getting in trouble with students before even Sorted...must be a new record" a patronizing voice said. Ron looked at the man behind Bella in shock and Bella turned to see Tom. He was looking at Draco with crimson eyes. He was fingering his wand in very much the same way as Bella was currently.

"I didn't need help from you, Professor," Bella spat. Tom raised an aristocratic eyebrow in response to her comment. Bella scowled at him and his lips curved into a smirk. He turned from her and stepped up the stairs again.

"We're ready for you, now. Single file line. Now" Tom said, in a commanding voice. They got into line and walked into the Great Hall. Bella watched in wonder. There were large green tapestries hanging from the ceiling with silver snakes on them. There were four long tables with students sitting at each one. The first was a barrage of gold and red. The second, blue and bronze. The third was yellow and black. And the last was a host of green and silver.

Golden plates and goblets were in front of each student and pearl white ghosts hovered over the students, having quiet conversations that she could barely hear in the large room.

Her green eyes wandered to look up and she stared in wonder at the ceiling of the Great Hall. It was black with shimmering white stars decorating.

"It's bewitched to look like the sky outside. I read about it in 'Hogwarts, A History'" Bella heard Hermione whisper to another first year. Her gaze wandered again and she looked around at the staring faces. She looked down to avoid their staring

Bella looked at the front and gazed at the platform where another long table was. Right in the middle of was a large throne. An old wizard sat there, watching her. He had long silver hair and a matching beard. His purple robes matched his old wizarding hat. A nose that looked like it had once been broken adorned his face and sparkling blue eyes were partially hidden by half moon glasses. But Bella could see deep in those eyes was a grief that seemed to be consuming him.

Bella felt a tap on her shoulder. She turned to see Ron. He was looking at her, pointedly.

"What did he mean by 'Lady Slytherin'?" Ron asked. Bella quietly groaned and shook her head before looking at the small stool up front with a ragged hat sitting on it. There was a split around the brim and she frowned at it. Something was up with it. She could feel magic radiating from it.

"Later Ron...I'll tell you later" Bella said, quietly. Ron looked like he was going to object when the rip around the brim of the Hat opened wide like a mouth and it began to sing.

"Oh you may not think I'm pretty,

But don't judge on what you see,

Oh you may not think me pretty,

But don't judge on what you see,

I'll eat myself if you can find
A smarter hat than me.
You can keep your bowlers black,
Your top hats sleek and tall,
For I'm the Hogwarts Sorting Hat
And I can cap them all.
There's nothing hidden in your head
The Sorting Hat can't see,
So try me on and I will tell you
Where you ought to be.
You might belong in Gryffindor,
Where dwell the brave at heart,
Their daring, nerve, and chivalry
Set Gryffindors apart;
You might belong in Hufflepuff,
Where they are just and loyal,
Those patient Hufflepuffs are true
And unafraid of toil;
Or yet in wise old Ravenclaw,
If you've a ready mind,
Where those of wit and learning,
Will always find their kind;

Or perhaps in Slytherin
You'll make your real friends,
Those cunning folks use any means
To achieve their ends.
So put me on! Don't be afraid!
And don't get in a flap!
You're in safe hands (though I have none)
For I'm a Thinking Cap!"

Bella's lips spread into a smile and the entire hall broke into applause when the Hat finished its song. Ron looked a little disgruntled to say the least.

"So we just go to try on a hat!" Ron whispered. Bella looked at him, quizzically.

"Well, I can't say that I knew but what did you think we would be doing?" she asked, genuinely curious. Ron's ears burned red slightly.

"Fred was going on about wrestling a troll. I'll kill him..." Ron trailed off. Tom stepped forward with a roll of parchment.

"When I call your name, you will put on the Sorting Hat and sit on the stool" Tom said. Everyone looked around nervously.

"Abbott, Hannah!"

A girl with blonde pigtails stumbled forward and placed the Sorting Hat on her head. A moment later—

"HUFFLEPUFF!"

The Hufflepuffs gave a roar of approval when the girl wandered over the table.

"Bones, Susan!"

"HUFFLEPUFF!"

"Boot, Terry!"

"RAVENCLAW!"

"Brocklehurst, Mandy" went to Ravenclaw. The table was ecstatic about receiving another Ravenclaw into their brood. However, their reaction paled to when "Brown, Lavender" was received by Gryffindor. They roared like lions. Except for the Weasley twins. They were cat-calling.

Bella phased out as she stared into space. She was worried. No beyond worried about where she would go. She was worried that she'd go Slytherin. And suddenly...

"Granger, Hermione!"

Hermione all but ran to the stool and jammed the Hat onto her head. Her expression was eager.

"GRYFFINDOR!" the Hat shouted. Ron groaned and Bella smiled, encouragingly at her friend. Bella watched as Neville Longbottom was sorted into Gryffindor. Morag MacDougal was sorted into another house and she watched as Tom's lips curled into a sneer.

"Malfoy, Draco."

Draco swaggered forward with a confident smirk on his face. He stepped forward confidently and just as he placed the Hat on his...

"SLYTHERIN!"

Draco stood up, looking pleased and he walked to the table where his friends Crabbe and Goyle. Bella faded out again and she frowned.

Now she knew that she didn't want to go to Slytherin. Tom's eyes settled on her and a small smile spread across his face.

"Potter, Bella" he said. Everyone searched for her in the crowd of first years. Bella stepped forward uncertainly.

"Potter, did he say?"

"The Bella Potter?"

"The-Girl-Who-Lived?"

Bella flushed and she dropped the hat over her head, the last image she had was of the large hall full of children staring at her.

"Difficult...very difficult. Plenty of courage, I see. Not a bad mind either. There's talent...so much talent. And so much power. And a nice thirst to prove yourself. To Tom Riddle I see. Not just to him. To the world...now that's interesting. So...where will I put you?" asked a voice. Bella clutched the stool underneath her.

Not Slytherin! Don't put me in Slytherin, she thought.

"Not Slytherin, eh? Are you sure? You could be greater than I already know you'll become, you. It's all here in your head and Slytherin will help your way to greatness, no doubt about that—no? Well if you're sure, better be..." the voice trailed off.

"GRYFFINDOR!"

Bella took off the hat in relief and there was a roar of approval. She glanced at Tom and could see a knowing smirk on his face. She didn't know why she was relieved that he wasn't angry that she wasn't in Slytherin. It wasn't like she was supposed to care. He was only a professor that she had just met, not even two months ago. Fred and George were standing and clapping happily.

"We got Potter! We got Potter!" they cheered, excitedly.

Bella walked shakily but happily towards the Gryffindor table. She sat across from the ghost who had ruffles around his neck. Hermione sat next to him and she smiled at Bella, her smile warm.

"I'm happy you're in Gryffindor, Bella" Hermione whispered as the cheers quieted down. Bella grinned back and gave a giddy nod.

"I am too" Bella whispered. She looked up at the High Table, inspecting it. The chair to the right of Dumbledore wasn't plain like the others. It was silver and she suspected it was Tom's. Next to Tom's chair sat a woman with black hair pulled into a strict bun. There was not a hair out of place. She wore black robes that matched her hair and everything about her looked crisp and stern.

Bella turned to look at the Sorting as Tom looked down and trailed down to what would be the next person.

"Weasley, Ron."

Bella watched as the redheaded walked, slowly up to the stool. He was pale green now, looking like he was going to be sick at any moment. With shaking hands he placed the hat on his head.

"GRYFFINDOR!"

Ron took off the hat with a thick sigh of relief. Bella grinned and clapped happily. She looked at Hermione who had a slight frown on her face. Ron walked over, quickly towards them. The boy with the badge on his chest that had to be Ron's brother patted him on the shoulder.

"Well done, Ron. Excellent" he said, pompously. Ron shot his brother a withering look and snorted at his self-righteous tone.

"Thanks Percy..." he trailed off.

They watched as "Zabini, Blaise" was made to go into Slytherin. Tom rolled up the parchment and picked up the Sorting Hat before making his way down the aisle. He stopped right behind Bella.

"Well done, little closet Slytherin" Tom whispered to Bella before he continued as if nothing had been said. Bella froze up and looked at Tom with wide eyes. How had known?

How the hell had he known?

"You know Professor Riddle?" asked Percy. Bella gulped and looked at the plate and goblet in front of her with an intense stare.

"Something like that..."

She looked up to see Dumbledore standing up, spreading his arms wide. He was beaming at them, his blue eyes sparkling madly. He looked psychotic but it was a good psychotic, she supposed.

"Welcome. Welcome to a new year at Hogwarts! Before we begin our banquet, I would like to say a few words. And here they are: Nitwit! Blubber! Oddment! Tweak!" Dumbledore shouted. Bella's eyes widened and she lifted an eyebrow.

She watched as Tom came through a side door and walked across the platform to sit down next to Dumbledore. He winked at her and she glared at him.

"Is he mad?" snapped Bella, speaking of Tom. Percy didn't seem to get what she was talking about.

"Mad? He's a genius! Best wizard in the world! But he is a bit mad, yes. Potatoes, Bella?" asked Percy. Bella stopped and looked at him with a peculiar expression that Hermione caught on to.

"What is it Bella?" she asked. Bella shook her head and gave a slight smile. She could feel the magic pulsing through the stone that seemed to be trying to get to a particular person sitting at the High Table.

"The castle...it's beautiful" Bella said, changing what she was going to say when she began getting curious looks. She heaped roast beef and roasted potatoes onto her plate before beginning to eat. The witch looked up with to see the ghost sitting across from her staring sadly.

"That does look good. I haven't eaten in four hundred years" he said to her. Bella frowned and tilted her head.

"Who are you? My Uncle Sirius didn't tell me about you" Bella said. At her words the ghost in question looked absolutely affronted and he straightened up, pompously and cleared his throat.

"I am Sir Nicholas de Mimsy-Porpington. I am the resident ghost of Gryffindor" he said, proudly.

"Oh I know you! You're Nearly Headless Nick. Don't ask how he's nearly headless. My brothers said it was gross" Ron said. Nearly Headless Nick gave him a scowl before floating away to speak to others. Bella tuned in to Percy and Hermione's conversation.

"I do hope we start right away. There's so much to learn and I'm particularly interested in Transfiguration. I am a Muggleborn so I'd love to see how it works. In the Muggle world these things are supposed to be impossible. You know, turning something into something else" Hermione lectured. Percy nodded, interested in what she was saying.

Bella didn't know how that was possible. The girl was too excited for classes in her opinion. The one class Bella looked forward to was Defense Against the Dark Arts. And she also dreaded it if Tom insisted on calling her 'little closet Slytherin'.

"You'll be starting small and simple, just matches into needle, and stuff like that" Percy said.

The food disappeared and was replaced by sweets. Bella turned to stare at the High Table. She looked next to Tom where a teacher with a hooked nose was speaking to the DADA teacher. He had greasy hair and sallow skin. He looked from Tom and he turned to glare at Bella. She flinched back and Tom seemed to notice. An amused smile was on his face and she snarled under her breath.

He's a teacher. A teacher, she thought, reminding herself of his position. She couldn't go around trying to murder her teacher. But if she saw him while she wasn't in school she'd murder him.

"Who's that talking to Professor Riddle?" asked Bella. Percy looked up and he straightened.

"That's Professor Snape. He teaches Potions. No wonder Riddle looks amused. Snape is after his job and always expresses his dislike for him. Knows an awful lot about the Dark Arts. Snape, I mean. But Riddle is a far more competent teacher. He's very intelligent, if a little sarcastic at times" Percy explained. Bella let out a sharp cackle and shivered when it reminded her of her dream.

"I don't need to be told. I've suffered his annoying comments before" Bella snapped. She turned away as the desserts disappeared and Dumbledore stood once more and he cleared his throat.

Silence fell over the entire Hall.

"Ahem. Just a few more words now that we are all fed and watered. I have a few start-of-term notices to give you. First years should note that the forest on the grounds is forbidden to all pupils. And a few of our older students would do well to remember that as well."

Dumbledore turned his bright eyes onto the Weasley twins who exchanged smirks with each other and ducked their heads, as if bowing.

"I have also been asked by Mr. Filch, the caretaker, to remind you all that no magic should be used between classes in the corridors. Quidditch trials will be held in the second week of the term. Anyone interested in playing for their house teams should contact Madam Hooch" Dumbledore continued. Tom leaned back with a roll of his eyes at the mention of Quidditch.

Well, I'll be joining the Quidditch team, decided Bella. Even despite the fact that she knew she wasn't necessarily allowed to be on the team.

And finally, I must tell you that this year, the third-floor corridor on the right-hand side is out of bounds to everyone who does not wish to die a very painful death" Dumbledore concluded. Bella's eyes widened and Tom's own eyes sparkled with mirth.

"He's not serious? Is he?" Bella murmured to Percy.

"He must be. It's strange that he doesn't tell us why. He usually does when he forbids us from going places. I mean the Forbidden Forest is full of dangerous creatures. Everyone knows that so that's why we aren't allowed. I would've thought he'd have told us prefects" Percy said, frowning and disgruntled that he didn't know what was going on. Bella hid her amused look.

"And now before bed, let us sing the school song! Pick your favorite tune" Dumbledore said. Bella looked with a smile as both and Tom and Snape scowled at the exact same time.

Dumbledore flicked his wand and a long golden ribbon flew out, swirling into what appeared to be words.

"Hogwarts, Hogwarts, Hoggy Warty Hogwarts,

Teach us something, please,

Whether we be old and bald

Or young with scabby knees,

Our heads could do with filling

With some interesting stuff,

For now they're bare and full of air,

Dead flies and bits of fluff,

So teach us things worth knowing,

Bring back what we've forgot,

Just do your best, we'll do the rest,

And learn until our brains all rot" the school sang together in different tunes. Tom wasn't singing at all. He sat there with a sneer obviously on his face.

Everyone finished at different times. However, the Weasley twins were last and were singing to a funeral march. Dumbledore continued to conduct them and when they were finally finished, he clapped loudest.

"And now bedtime! Off you trot!" Dumbledore commanded.

The Gryffindor first years followed Percy through the crowds and as they made their way up the stairs. Bella's eyes drooped but she did have enough energy to shoot glares when people pointed at her or stared. They went up the marble staircase and approached the seventh floor. As they went down the corridor Bella could make out a portrait of a very fat lady in a pink dress.

"Password?" she asked. Percy stood up taller, his head thrown back.

"Caput Draconis" he answered. The portrait swung open to reveal hole in the wall. The group walked inside and Percy pointed towards where the girl's dormitory was and the boy's. Bella and Ron stood outside while Hermione waited for Bella on the steps to the girl's dormitory

"Great food, isn't it?" asked Ron. Bella nodded in agreement.

"I'll speak to you later. See you tomorrow" Bella said. Ron nodded and they went up to the respective dormitories.

"Bella, I don't know why you insist on being friends with such a prat" Hermione said, annoyed when they got to their dormitories. Parvarti Patil and Lavender Brown had already claimed beds so Bella and Hermione settled on their own.

"He's just a prat to you, Hermione. I'm tired...I'll see you tomorrow" Bella said, as she changed into her pajamas. As soon as she fell asleep, her dreams restarted.

She was on the same battlefield but now no one was on the ground. It seemed like the battle hadn't started yet. The woman who had been cackling madly stood there with her hood up, black hair streaming down from it. The man stood next to her and on the other side of her was an old man with pale eyes. Two wands were in the woman's hands.

People in black robes and white masks stood behind them like a massive army.

"Don't do this..." a voice whispered from the other side. The other side wore assorted robes. The whisper had come from a boy who looked a year younger.

"I can do whatever I want" the woman snapped.

"I loved you. I really did" the boy with red hair said. His chocolate brown eyes burned with sorrow. The man glared at the boy.

"She didn't love you. You're a fool" the man said. And suddenly, the man let out a green curse.

"Avada Kedavra!" he shouted. And the boy fell dead.

And chaos reigned.

Bella woke up, gasping and shaking, and sweat pouring down her face. She trembled before falling back asleep.

Chapter III

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

"There, look...do you see her?"

"Where?"

"Next to the tall redhead."

"Did you see her face? She's so pretty."

"Who cares! Did you see her scar?"

The whispers made Bella's eyes twitch as she walked out of the portrait hole, Ron standing next to her Hermione trailing not far behind.

"Hermione, hurry up" Bella said, not wanting to lose her. Hermione rushed to her side and Ron's expression fell. They went down to eat and soon everything was a blur to Bella.

Bella liked Hogwarts. But some of the staff left something to be desired. Argus Filch.

Bella noticed that Sirius had failed to mention Argus Filch. Filch was the caretaker of Hogwarts and he was the meanest soul Bella had ever met. It didn't help that Bella, Ron, and Hermione had gotten on the wrong side of him on the very first day when trying to force their way through a certain locked door.

The door in question, no need to say, turned out to be the out-of-bounds entrance to the third floor corridor where they were forbidden to go to. And when they had insisted that they had gotten lost he hadn't believed them. They were saved by the most unlikely person.

Tom Riddle. When he had found them, Filch was threatening with them being locked in the dungeons and ranting about the time when corporal punishment was allowed. Bella had been pressed against the wall, trying to edge away from the crazy man when Tom had come out of nowhere.

"Now what's going on here, Miss Potter? Getting in trouble already?" Tom had asked, smoothly. Filch had answered instead of her.

"The little brat was trying to get into the third floor when the Headmaster specifically stated it was off limits" Filch had explained. Tom had barely spared him glance, obviously awaiting Bella's answer.

"It was mistake. I got lost, Professor. And he wouldn't listen" Bella said, throwing Filch at scathing look. She looked down as she heard a meow and flinched when she met the lamp like eyes of Filch's cat, Mrs. Norris.

"I see. I won't take points this time. Now run along, little serpent" he hissed, switching to Parseltongue in the middle of his speech. Hermione and Ron shuddered at the sound of it. Filch flinched but Bella nodded, her jaw set tightly.

"Yes, sir."

She walked away with those two words, not looking forward to another encounter with Filch.

After that encounter she had found her classes and there Bella there was a lot to learn about magic besides waving your wand. It was hard to understand the theory but the actual practical part seemed to come natural to her.

On Wednesday nights at midnight she had to go up to the tallest tower and study the night sky in Astronomy. Bella liked this class in particular. Gazing through her silver telescope at the sky was relaxing. The only part she didn't particular appreciate was learning the name of distant planets and stars. There was just so many.

Ron didn't seem to like that class as much as she did.

But Ron and Bella both agreed that History of Magic was easily the most boring class. Hermione liked it and she to be the only student who could withstand the boring lectures delivered by Professor Binns.

Professor Binns was the only ghost who taught a class and he had been extremely old when he had died. He had fallen asleep in front

of the staff room fire and he had left his body there the next morning. All Binns did was drone on and on about different events that Bella could care less about. Hermione was the only one who actively took notes and Bella found reading Hermione's notes a thousand times more interesting than listening to Binns.

Three times a week they went to the green houses where they were taught Herbology by Professor Sprout, a dumpy and short witch with grey corkscrew curls that made her look like a kind old grandmother. They found out about different plants and fungi and what they were used for.

Charms was interesting and Professor Flitwick amused Bella to know end. He had to stand on a stack of books to see past his desk and when he had read over Bella's name at roll call he had let out an excited squeak and pointed at her. She had slid down in her seat slightly to avoid the ogling she received.

Professor McGonagall, the stern looking witch Bella had seen the first day, was completely different. She wasn't a teacher to cross. As soon as the students had settled down they had received a lecture.

"Transfiguration is some of the most complex and dangerous magic you will learn here at Hogwarts. Anyone caught messing around in my class will leave and not come back. You have been warned. Do not let me catch you not heeding this warning" she had said as they sat ram-rod straight.

Then she had demonstrated some Transfiguration when she changed her desk into a pig and back. Everyone was impressed and eager to try it when McGonagall had ended their fantasy by stating that they were a long way from doing that and they would be starting simple. After taking almost 8 inches worth of notes on their parchment McGonagall set them task of turning a match into a needle just as Percy had predicted.

At the end of class no one except for Hermione had made any difference with her match.

The class everyone had looked forward to was just as Bella had expected. Absolutely amazing.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 5th of September 1991

1:00 PM

Bella's Defense Against the Dark Arts class was made of all the first year and Gryffindors and Slytherins. Apparently, Draco had heard rumors about how well Riddle treated the Slytherins. He was smirking as he walked into the room and passed Bella who was sitting between Ron and Hermione. He opened his mouth to say something when Bella glared at him.

"Save it, Malfoy" she snapped as he passed. Malfoy smirked at her before walking away, feeling accomplished that he had gotten a rise out of her. There a hissing sound and shrill screams sounded from the first years as they saw the source of it. Bella felt something long and heavy sliding underneath her. The snake wrapped around her chair and leaned its head on her shoulder.

"Hello, little hatchling. I've heard you're a speaker from Tom" the snake hissed. Bella sat ramrod straight and she was surprised to see Tom sitting on his desk with a smirk on his face. Hermione raised a shaky hand.

"Uh...sir, is this your snake?" Hermione whispered. Tom nodded, not saying a single word. Bella shuddered as she heard another hiss from the snake. She glanced to her left to see Ron staring at the snake, his skin pale. His freckles stood out from how pale he was. Bella looked at the mirror in the corner and could see that she wasn't just her usual pale. She was sickly looking. The snake had bright eyes that were concentrated on her.

Draco was cringing away from the snake, repeatedly.

"Hatchling, I'm speaking to you. Speak back. Speak back. Speak back" the snake baited. Tom's smirk was widening, as Bella seemed to be breaking. He knew what the snake was whispering to her.

"Tell her to stop. Please...tell her to stop" Bella said, her voice hoarse. Tom stood up and rapped his wand down on her desk and she jumped. This caused the snake to hiss at her.

"In the real world, Miss Potter, if she was an enemy would you beg me to stop or would you do something? Remember, Miss Potter...she's poisonous. You have thirty seconds before she bites you. What do you do?" Tom asked, harshly. Bella shuddered and leaned in to the snake.

"My name is Bella. Please leave me alone" she whispered. The snake dropped from her chair and slithered towards Tom before going up his side and wrapping itself around him.

"It seems that I have my work cut out for me this year..." Tom said, talking to himself he stroked the snake on the top of her head.

"Nagini...go keep Bella company. Do not distract her while I teach" Tom hissed to her. The first years shuddered at the sound of it and Bella couldn't help it as well. She shrunk back as Nagini slithered back over to her with what could be called a grin if snakes could grin.

"Now, students, in the outside world, there are much worse things than a python. There are people out there who will want to kill you, for whatever reason. Some may want to kill you for the simple reason of you being a Muggleborn" Tom said, his gaze falling on Hermione. Hermione squeaked and she tugged on a lock of her bushy hair. Tom didn't even mention her squeak and he began to pace.

"They may want to kill you because you've done some idiotic thing to provoke them. But the reason doesn't matter because the wizarding world is a dangerous place for everyone. For purebloods, for half-bloods, and for Muggleborns. Out there it's the survival of the fittest. And my task...is to make you the fittest. Is this understood?" asked Tom. Everyone was too shocked to say anything. Bella stared with wide eyes. He knew he was stuff, that was true but what he said terrified her. He was being serious.

"I'm sorry. Do I not speak English? When asked a question that is to be jointly answered you respond with the appropriate answer of 'Yes, Professor Riddle' or 'No, Professor Riddle'," Tom said, coldly. Everyone shuddered and cleared their throats.

"Yes, Professor Riddle" they said, quietly but in unison. Tom nodded and Nagini went across Bella's shoulders and rested her large head on top of Bella's hand. Nagini hissed at her.

"Tom strokes my head when I do this. Can you do that too?" Nagini asked. Bella shakily began to stroke Nagini's head and Ron looked at her in horror.

"Bella..." Ron started. A hand landed on his desk.

"Do you have something to say, Mr. Weasley? And Miss Potter...are you starting conversations?" Tom asked. Bella's eyes narrowed. He knew fully well that she hadn't said a word.

"No, sir. I was only stroking Nagini's head. She wanted me to" Bella said, bravely. She suddenly realized her mistake and Tom seemed to as well.

"How did you know she wanted you to, Miss Potter?" Tom asked, slowly. Bella looked down and she dropped her hand from Nagini's head. Nagini nudged her hand again and Tom raised an eyebrow.

"I...she nudged my hand."

Tom frowned at the blatant lie and Bella was surprised that he didn't comment. Tom only sighed heavily, sounding disappointed in her. Bella scowled, not knowing why he was disappointed in her.

"Fine. Textbooks out. We're going to learn about magical aura today. It will help you in the long run. Wands out" Tom commanded, spinning around, his dark crimson robes spinning with him. Bella took out her wand and placed it in front of her. Hermione raised her hand shakily. Tom nodded at her.

"Sir, when we went to most of our other classes, we went over class expectations..." Hermione trailed off when Tom raised an elegant eyebrow at her.

"I'm well aware of what happened in your other classes, Miss Granger. But here, we're going learn about auras. Tell me, Miss Granger, what an aura is and why it is useful when going against an opponent who doesn't show how strong they truly are?" Tom prompted, quickly. Hermione jumped but then straightened as she was suddenly immersed in her element.

"An aura is the intensity of someone's power. It can be revealed with a simple spell and the more intense the light is, the more powerful someone is. This can help you judge whether you can easily defeat your enemy or if you should retreat and regroup" Hermione recited from the textbook. Tom's lips curled into a smile. He could recognize an eidetic memory. He nodded once and picked up his wand.

"The spell is simple. I will demonstrate. Miss Potter, come here" Tom said. Bella scowled, knowing he was picking on her. She stood, grabbing her wand and walked towards him, Nagini trailing off of her. Tom withdrew his yew wand and both of their wands gave a jerk before

"Auratus Revelio" Tom said, quietly. Bella shuddered as suddenly a crimson light exploded around her. It was wrapped around a burning white light. Black light swirled around her and she shuddered as the light caressed her skin. She couldn't help but notice that the light had a life of its own. The light disappeared and was suddenly gone. Bella stumbled back and landed on her butt. Giggles erupted from the Slytherins and she shook her head, dizzily.

"Go back to your seat, Miss Potter" Tom said, his eyes still wide. But the surprise was masked from his eyes now. Bella walked quickly back to her chair and she looked down with her clenched hand for the rest of the class.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 7th of September 1991

8:45 AM

As Bella finished up breakfast she looked over at Ron who was inspecting his schedule.

"What have we got first today?" asked Bella as she finished eating her sugar coated porridge. Ron glanced down and gave a loud groan.

"Double Potions with Slytherins. Snape's their Head of House. They say he favors them. We'll see if that's true. Fred and George were wrong. Riddle doesn't favor them more. He seems to favor—" Ron started. Hermione looked over at Bella, meaningfully.

"He seems to favor you. Well not exactly favor. You looked terrified. He's picking on you" Hermione said, her tone half jealous and half worried. Bella looked up at her and shrugged.

"I don't think he likes me much...in fact that I think he hates me" Bella said, truthfully. Hermione shrugged but gave her a skeptical gaze before noticing that Ron was glaring at her.

"What?" Hermione snapped. Ron looked away.

"No one asked you anything you blood know-it-all" Ron snapped. Bella sighed and held up her hand to stop what she knew would quickly turn into another argument. They looked at her with wide eyes.

"You are both my friends so could you stop fighting?" Bella asked, tiredly. She glanced down at her porridge and scraped the remains of it and finished it off. She thrust her hand into bacon and stuffed it straight in her mouth, eating from the platter in front of you. Hedwig suddenly swooped down with a letter in her beak. Bella smiled, exhaustedly as she ripped open the letter.

Dear Doe,

How's your life at Hogwarts? Did you pull any pranks lately? I'm telling you, Doe, you have to find the Marauder's Map to be able to execute a prank properly but you keep ignoring me. Anyway, have you gathered your own generation of Marauders? They would be excellent backup, I think.

And how are your classes? Have you had Potions yet? I heard that git, Snivellus...I mean Severus Snape teaches that class. He may give you hard time. He despised James and he hated me just the same. And what about Riddle?

Is he a good teacher? I know he likes to get a rise of you. No offense, Doe, but you tend to rise to the challenge. Heh...did you get a detention yet? I bet you got a detention. I hope it wasn't with McGonagall. Under no circumstances are you to piss her off. You do and I'll ground you for life. She's a brilliant witch but she's dead scary.

Write back when you can.

Love,

Sirius

Bella laughed, quietly at the letter and Hermione looked at her with a scrutinizing gaze. The bushy haired witch knew something was wrong with her.

"Are you okay, Bella? You seem tired. I know you woke up in the middle of the night. I heard you" Hermione said, quietly. Ron suddenly looked alarmed and he leaned in, curious.

"What's wrong Bella?" Ron asked. Bella looked away. She leaned in.

"My scar...it's never hurt before. But I had this dream...I'll tell you guys about it later. We should go down to Potions. It's down in the dungeons" Bella said. Ron nodded but he still looked wide-eyed. The trio made their way downstairs and they settled down.

Severus Snape came in from the side door of the classroom, his black robes billowing behind him, making him reminiscent to a bat. This thought made Bella snicker under her breath. He started with taking roll call.

And he had paused at Bella's name.

"Bella Potter. Our little celebrity..." he said, softly, mockingly. Bella gritted her teeth but said nothing.

Draco, Crabbe, and Goyle snickered behind their hands. He looked up at Bella with black eyes. They weren't a sparkling black like Hagrid's. They weren't the same charcoal that Tom possessed that made Bella feel safe for some strange reason. They were black. Pitch black. Soulless and empty.

And this made Bella shiver.

"You are here to learn the subtle science and exact art of

potion-making," he began. He spoke in barely more than a whisper. But he had the commanding presence of someone who knew what they were doing and it'd be dangerous to cross them.

"As there is little foolish wand-waving here, many of you will hardly believe this is magic. I don't expect you will really understand the beauty of the softly simmering cauldron with its shimmering fumes, the delicate power of liquids that creep through human veins, bewitching the mind, ensnaring the senses... I can teach you how to bottle fame, brew glory, even stopper death - if you aren't as big a bunch of dunderheads as I usually have to teach" he finished.

Bella stared at him in shock. He knew what he was teaching. She didn't know what Percy was talking about but now she could see he was just being a pompous ass. Snape knew what he was talking about.

Hermione was edging forward on her seat with her hand twitching as if she were waiting to show that she wasn't what Snape had so kindly labeled his less than competent students. A dunderhead.

"Potter! What would I get if I added powdered root of asphodel to an infusion of wormwood?" Snape asked, sharply. Bella bit her lip. Hermione's hand shot up at Bella's first sign of hesitation.

Snape simply ignored the Muggleborn's hand.

"Er...I don't know sir. But I think it makes a sleeping potion of some sort" Bella said, awkwardly. That didn't seem to appease Snape. He sneered at her.

"Tut, tut. Fame clearly isn't everything."

"Let's try this again with a simpler question for your simple mind. Where would you find a bezoar?" Snape asked.

Hermione raised her hand as high as she could without standing up. Bella saw Draco shaking with laughter. She couldn't help but growl and she cleared her throat. This she knew. Sirius had accidentally poisoned himself plenty of times with the old poisoned wine bottles in the cellar that the Blacks had used to poison enemies they had invited over.

"In a goat" Bella answered without hesitation. Snape's sneer grew fiercer.

"What is the difference between monkshood and wolfsbane?" Snape snapped. Bella bit the inside of her cheek and Hermione suddenly stood, her arm stretched as much as she could.

"Er...I don't know. I do know that wolfsbane is an ingredient in a potion that neutralizes the wolf senses when a werewolf transforms" Bella said. Snape's sneer grew and Hermione started hopping up and down.

"Sit. Down! Potter, did you not think to open a textbook to come?" demanded Snape. Bella's patience snapped and she growled, angrily. Snape gave a winning smirk and Bella couldn't help but snap out at him.

"Sir, I did open a textbook before I came. And I did read through all of of them. But, forgive me sir, I don't have a perfect memory. I wasn't looking to memorize the entire book and I bet half the students here didn't. If you want a answer ask Hermione. She seems to know the answer" Bella snapped, angrily. Snape's black eyes narrowed.

"Fifteen points from Gryffindor I think, Potter. I don't appreciate your tone. For your information, asphodel and wormwood make a sleeping potion so powerful it is known as the Draught of Living Death. A beozar is a stone taken from the stomach of a goat and it will save you from most poisons. As for monkshood and wolfsbane, they are the same plant and is also known as aconite" Snape stated, matter-of-factly. Bella glowered at him and he looked at them with a fierce glare.

"Well? Why aren't you all copying this down?" he snapped. Quickly, everyone rushed to take out parchment and quills. Of course, Hermione already had hers out.

For the Slytherins, class proceeded on a great note. For the Gryffindors, the first Potions class seemed to get worst. Unfortunately, Neville had somehow melted Seamus' cauldron into a twisted blob.

Five more points from Gryffindor.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 8th of September 1991

12:03 AM

Bella shuddered in her sleep as the horrible dream came to her. But it was different this time. They were at a different battlefield. This battlefield wasn't as dead and twisted as the one before. This one was lush but one side had the aura of darkness and the other, the aura of light.

The other battlefield had been different. Both sides had been twisted beyond belief and had a little of Dark and Light on each side. It had simply been magic. But now, Bella knew which side was which.

Bella stood to the side as she watched the Dark side. The dark haired man and the old man led them but sitting behind them were four people on horseback. Two were obviously women and two were obviously men.

The woman from before was sitting on the back of a white unicorn. The unicorn had a definite evil look in its eyes. Though the unicorn was white, its normal white mane was pure black. Bella shuddered at the thought that someone out there could corrupt the most pure creature on the face of the planet. The woman held her wands in both hands, ready to attack at any minute.

The second woman had stick straight brown hair. She had a sword in hand and rode atop a Granian, a winged horse that was said to be the fastest in the world. But this Granian wasn't the typical gray. It was a blazing red, it's eyes a deep black.

The next person sitting on a horse was a man with tanned skin and dark hair. He was on an Abraxan, another flying horse. It was palomino and snorted, as if ready to charge at the other group of witches and wizards.

The next was a man with blonde hair. He rode atop a thestral that somehow was visible to all. His silvery grey eyes flashed and his mouth was twisted into a wicked smirk. He was ready to fight as well.

"You don't have to do this, Gellert" an old man called on the other side. Bella easily recognized him as Albus Dumbledore.

"It isn't he who is doing anything! It is us!" shrieked the woman with the sword. Bella's voice shivered at the edge of madness to the voice. It was the sound of a person who had spent a couple years surrounded by dementors and in Azkaban.

"My dear girl, you have grown dark and twisted. Let the light guide you" Dumbledore called out earnestly.

"What did you expect after years in that place you call a prison? I did nothing wrong! You threw me in there! And left me to ROT!" the woman screamed. Even as the man on the Abraxan cast her a sympathetic look nothing happened.

"You cast the Cruciatus curse! On a child! How is that not wrong?" shouted a black man on the Light side. He had an earring in his ear but he looked very unfamiliar to Bella.

"We were both children! I just did what Auntie Trixie taught me. Maybe I can have YOU as a dummy. Grandfather Gellert! Can I play with him? Please!" begged the woman, childishly. The old man she had called Gellert turned to look at her and gave her an appeasing smile.

"Mórrígan, you may have him once we're done here. I promise" Gellert said. The woman squealed and looked over at the man who had cast her a sympathetic look and grinned.

"Apollo! I got a new toy! We can play with him when we get him! Do you want to?" Mórrígan. Apollo smiled. It wasn't a good smile and the black man shuddered.

"Of course..." he trailed off.

Bella woke up screaming, her scar inflamed in pain.

Chapter IV

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 12th of September 1991

3:30 PM

Bella watched as Neville fell from the broom and Madam Hooch rushed over. Hermione looked terrified now and didn't even want to touch it. She inspected him and saw him whimper as she poked his wrist.

"Ooh...broken wrist. Up you get boy. I'll bring you to the Hospital Wing" Hooch muttered. She turned to the rest of the group were watching curiously, the Muggleborns looking scared, the Slytherin purebloods looking haughty, and the Gryffindor half-bloods and purebloods looking worried.

"None of you is to move while I take this boy to the Hospital Wing! You leave those brooms where they are or you'll be out of Hogwarts before you can say 'Quidditch'. Come on dear. Let's get you fixed up" Hooch said, leading Neville away. Bella frowned at the sight of Neville's tear streaked face.

As soon as Neville was out of sight Draco began to laugh.

"Did you see him? The great fat lump!" he cackled.

Parvarti Patil glared at him in anger.

"Shut up, Malfoy!" she snapped. Pansy Parkinson smirked.

"Ooh, sticking up for Longbottom? Never thought you'd stick up for fat crybabies, Parvarti" Pansy Parkinson teased.

Parvarti blushed and the Indian girl looked down, easily embarrassed.

Draco was the first to catch sight of the glass ball glittering in the sunlight where Neville had fallen. He raised to his eyes and smirked, wickedly.

"It's that stupid thing Longbottom's gran sent him!" Draco said, tossing it up and down, catching it easily. Bella's eyes narrowed on it.

"Give it here, Malfoy" Bella hissed, sounding like a serpent. Draco looked at her and gave a sly smirk. Bella gritted her teeth at it and Draco looked even more amused.

"No. I think I'll leave it up in a tree somewhere" Draco started. Bella took a step toward him, her wand out, ready to do whatever it took to take the Remembrall back. Bella hissed in anger.

"Give it here!" Bella shouted, as Malfoy leapt onto his broomstick. Bella's eyes widened as he flew up and sneered at her.

"Catch me if you can!" Malfoy challenged. Bella leapt onto her own broom. Hermione grabbed her arm and looked at her with a worried look. But something in her eyes freaked Bella out. It reminded her of someone...

"No! Bella...Madam Hooch told us not to move. You'll get us all into trouble..." Hermione said, pleadingly. Bella jerked away from her and Ron pulled her back. Bella gave Hermione a reassuring look.

"I got this Mione" Bella promised. She kicked off, the blood pounding her ears as she swooped in on Malfoy, pushing the Cleansweep to its limits. She swooped down on him, gracefully before landing in front of him. Ron gave an admiring whoop. Malfoy looked absolutely stunned.

"Give it here...or I'll knock you off your broom!" Bella shouted in the wind.

"Let's see you try, girl" he said, taunting her. Bella shot forward, crashing into him. He shook on his broom and on instinct Bella caught his arm and the broom. He looked at her in surprise before sneering and jerking away.

"Come and get it, Potter" he shouted as he threw the Remembrall in the air as high as could. Bella stared in horror as Malfoy streaked back down and Bella streaked upwards but was unable to catch it in the air. She went vertical, her legs wrapped around her broom tight to avoid falling over before stretching her hand out towards the ground. She snatched it from the air before arching towards the

ground, skidding to a stop as she dug her heels into the ground. She raised the Remembrall over her head, grinning.

"BELLA POTTER!"

The two screams were in unison and Bella cringed. They were both rather familiar to her. She watched as McGonagall and Riddle stormed across the field.

Bella's heart sank. Riddle looked pissed off. McGonagall's expression was little less unfathomable. Bella crossed her fingers behind her back, hoping that McGonagall got to her first. That wasn't the case. Riddle's long fingers dug into her shoulder and she bit her tongue to keep from crying out.

"What do you think you were doing? You could've gotten bloody killed if you fell off that broom! Are you suicidal?" snapped Riddle, annoyance and anger coloring his voice. McGonagall nodded in agreement.

"I completely agree, Tom. Potter! Never in my time at Hogwarts..." McGonagall trailed off and schooled her face.

"You could've broken your neck" Tom muttered, angrily. McGonagall nodded again and Bella looked down, trembling. Two of the most terrifying teachers in the whole school were ganging up on her.

She was surprised that she hadn't passed out yet.

"But, Professor, it wasn't her fault!" Parvarti protested. Tom didn't allow McGonagall to answer. He grabbed Bella's arm and she cringed.

"Miss Patil, you will do well to stay quiet. Bella Potter...you're going to be the death of me. I know it" Tom hissed at her, going into Parseltongue. McGonagall watched in surprise as Bella seemed to understand but looking away.

"I'm sorry, sir."

"But, Professor Riddle!" Hermione started. She couldn't believe she was sticking up for a girl who she knew had been wrong but she couldn't not do so...Bella was her friend.

"Malfoy..." Ron started. Tom's lip curled and he glowered at Ron.

"Minerva...please take care of this before I lose my composure" Tom said, quietly. He let go of Bella's arm before turning swiftly, grabbing Draco by the arm and dragging him along. Minerva nodded and she gestured for Bella follow when Tom stopped.

"Miss Potter! Detention, tomorrow night, 8 PM, my office. If you don't show up, I will send Nagini after you. Is this understood?" he asked, without turning around. Bella cleared her throat.

"Yes..."

"Answer me, correctly."

"Yes, sir."

"That's not correctly, Miss Potter. Come here and answer me correctly" Tom said, finally turning around. Bella grit her teeth and walked up to him, her emerald eyes cold and Draco watched in curiosity as a cold smile spread on Tom's face at Bella's defiance.

"Yes, sir" she hissed as quietly as possible. Draco's eyes widened and he was about to shout when Bella fingered her wand as she withdrew it as unnoticeably as possible without alarming her Head of House.

"A word and I'll hex you into oblivion" she snapped before spinning on her heel and walking away. McGonagall gestured towards Bella and Bella sighed, ready for more punishment.

"Come, Potter" was her only response. Bella followed in confusion and she exchanged looks with Ron and Hermione. Hermione only frowned at her slightly. Not in annoyance or frustration but as if she were in deep thought.

Bella followed until they were in front of Flitwick's class. McGonagall stepped in and looked at Flitwick expectantly.

"Excuse me, Professor Flitwick, but could I borrow Wood for a moment?"

This made Bella frantic. Who the bloody hell was Wood? What would McGonagall make him do to her? It was entirely too frightening.

Wood came out and Bella watched as his eyebrows rose. He looked absolutely confused and McGonagall offered no immediate explanation.

"Follow me."

The two students followed her into an empty classroom where she sat in the chair behind the desk. Bella approached the desk cautiously and McGonagall looked at Wood.

"Miss Potter, this is Oliver Wood. Wood, I've found you a seeker" McGonagall stated, matter-of-factly. Bella froze in shock and watched as Wood looked delighted and skeptical.

"Are you serious, Professor? She looks a little...delicate" Wood stated. Bella glared at him for his assumption. She knew she looked Fae like in her appearance. Fae always looked little and lithe. But she wasn't delicate.

"Look here, Wood, I'm not delicate. If I can deal with Professor Riddle's enormous psycho snake wrapped around me I can deal with being a seeker on a stupid Quidditch team" snapped Bella. McGonagall gave a thin smile to prove her point. Wood looked at her in surprise.

"As I was saying, the girl is a natural. I've never seen anything like it. Have you ridden a broomstick before...I'm sorry, I forgot I'm talking to Sirius Black's adopted daughter" McGonagall said, crisply as Bella started nodding.

"Professor, I've known how to ride a real broom since I was four. I got my first baby broomstick for my first birthday" Bella summarized. Wood's eyebrows went higher and higher.

"How high was she, Professor?" Wood asked, excitedly. McGonagall's thin smile seemed to get a little wider.

"She caught it while flying vertically. She looked like a true professional" McGonagall commented. Bella couldn't help but feel

like she was being caught into all of this too fast. So she asked a question that would most likely halt everything.

"What about Professor Riddle? He was very angry with me."

"Tom will get over it. I shall talk to Professor Dumbledore and see if we can bend the first-year rule. We need a better team than last year. Flattened in that last match against Slytherin. I could look Severus Snape nor Tom Riddle in the face for weeks..." McGonagall said, looking like she was reliving terrible events. Bella snorted, quietly. Wood looked her over again.

"She's the right build, now that I think about. She's light, thin, and from what you told me, speedy. A decent broom will make us unbeatable with her on the team" Wood said, slowly.

"Exactly, my thoughts, Wood."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 12th of September 1991

6:30 PM

"You're joking!" Hermione and Ron said, in unison. Bella shook her head with a self-satisfied smile. She had just told the two about her being on the Quidditch team. Hermione looked shocked and Ron looked like he was in awe and jealous.

"I'm not. But it's supposed to be a secret. Don't tell anyone" Bella said. They nodded and Hermione's gaze rolled to the High Table. She shuddered and Bella turned to see what she was looking at. Riddle was glowering at her with charcoal eyes. They were turning black when suddenly they connected with her gaze. His eyes flashed a fearsome crimson and Bella flinched, violently. She flinched so violently that she crashed into Ron's side.

"Did you see that?" Bella whispered. Ron was pale as well, his freckles standing out on his cheeks. Hermione had a peculiar expression.

"It depends on what you saw. Did you see Professor Riddle's eyes go red?" asked Ron. Hermione nodded and her hair bushed up a little more as a slight and sly smile crossed her face. Bella shivered at the look.

"Hermione...are you okay? You look...strange" Bella asked, uncertainly. Hermione shook her head and she resumed her worried and kind look. Bella sighed in contentment.

"Yeah...what do you mean I looked strange?" asked Hermione as they ate dinner. Bella took a bite out of her steak and kidney pie before answering.

"You looked a little...unhinged."

Hermione giggled and shook her head at the description.

"I'm sorry. I was just thinking. I was strange about Professor Riddle's eyes. What's even stranger was his reaction when you came down after getting the Remembrall" Hermione said. Ron looked at her, grudgingly.

"What do you mean?" he asked, slowly. Hermione looked at both of their clueless expressions in surprise.

"You mean you didn't see it?" she demanded. Ron rolled his eyes and crossed his arms.

"I wasn't really paying attention to his eyes, Herm...Granger. Did you see how Bella landed? It was amazing!" Ron said, excitedly. Hermione rolled her eyes at his inability to even say her name properly.

"And I was terrified. He was so...pissed off at me that I didn't really pay attention to his face."

"You were terrified? He was terrified!" sighed Hermione, in frustration. This only induced more confusion on account of the redhead and brunette, sitting next to each other. Hermione groaned.

"He was scared that Bella was falling. He was afraid that she would die. He was so pale and his knuckles were so tightly clenched that the knuckles were bone white. Why do you think he was so angry?"

He was angry that you put yourself in danger for something as stupid as a Remembrall" Hermione explained. Bella and Ron burst into laughter.

"Right, Hermione. Tom Riddle, afraid for me? We despise each other, Mione. I've disliked him from day one. He mocked me when I first met him in the Leaky Cauldron. First impressions, count" Bella explained. Ron nodded in agreement and finished off his large platter of food.

"And he's a right prat, too. In class he always picks on her and expects her know everything. And that creepy snake of his, is really weird. And for a DADA teacher he seems to know awfully a lot about the Dark Arts" Ron said, shuddering as he remember what had happened just earlier today. Nagini had passed over his desk to drape itself around Bella's shoulders once again.

"That's the point, Ron! He's the DADA teacher. He should know about both sides and—" Hermione said, stopping abruptly when Bella cut her off.

"Nagini's not that weird, Ron" Bella defended. She didn't like the snake's master but she liked the snake. Nagini was kind and sometimes when she didn't know something she would tell her the answer. It was rather nice. But Tom didn't seem to appreciate it. He got even fouler every time Nagini did that.

"What do you mean? It drapes itself across you every time we go into that place" Ron said, incredulous as to why Bella wasn't agreeing with him.

"I like Nagini. Don't ask me why but I do. And that's the end of the story. But her master, is another story" Bella said, with narrowed eyes. Hermione sighed, giving up on her friend and sorta friend.

"Okay, you don't have to like him! But you have to admit that he's a good teacher" Hermione said, pointedly. Bella and Ron nodded, grudgingly. The trio exited the Hall together.

"He's a fantastic teacher. But...his wand does bad things to my magic. And that is one uncomfortable experience" Bella said, lowering her voice. Hermione frowned and looked as if she were about say something. She was interrupted by a snide voice.

"Hey, Potter, why aren't you being carted off to join your disgrace of a godfather?" asked Draco Malfoy. Bella turned around and glared.

"You look a lot less girly now that you're on the ground. What made you get such a confidence boost? Did Mummy tell you how pretty you look?" grounded out Bella through clenched teeth.

"I'd take you on anytime on my own, Potter. Tonight, if you want. A wizard's duel. What did your outcast uncle not explain that to you?" Malfoy spat in anger. Ron stepped forward.

"Of course she has! I'm her second—" Ron started. Bella had held up her finger, signaling silence and her green eyes glinted. She stepped up to Malfoy and poked him the chest with her wand.

"You're going to want to shut up about my Uncle, Malfoy. Because I can make your life a total hell. And you're not going to want to. Riddle and Snape aren't here to protect you now or sssstop you from doing something sssstupid. I refussse to duel you becaussse that would be a wassssste of my time. And remember, Malfoy, not a word or I'll sssic Nagini on you. You know, Riddle'sss ssssnake, whose taken such a damn liking to me. Yeah, her. Now beat it" Bella hissed, dangerously. She looked on the verge of going into Parseltongue. Malfoy nodded, half terrified and Hermione grinned as he ran off.

"Good for you, Bella. Come on, let's go to the library" Hermione said. Suddenly, a long finger landed on Bella's shoulder and she stiffened.

"Threatening students, Bella?" a voice whispered. Bella jerked away and spun around. Riddle stood there with his arms crossed, his eyes crimson. Bella squeaked before taking off down the hallway. Hermione was right next to her and Ron was only a little behind.

She looked behind to see Riddle walking briskly behind her. Hermione darted behind a statue and two followed her, coming out from the passageway and they ran down the corridor and made two sharp rights. They finally saw an unfamiliar yet familiar door. Bella shoved at the door.

"It's locked! Merlin, I'm going to be expelled. And then Riddle's going to murder me for causing so much trouble! Dammit!" Bella groaned. No one questioned her on why he would care. Hermione sighed.

"For Merlin's sake, move over!" she commanded. They leaned to the side and heard footsteps. Hermione pointed at the door with her wand.

"Alohomora!"

The door clicked unlocked and they slammed the door behind them. They leaned against the door, listening for footsteps but they faded away. Dribble landed on Ron's shoulder.

"Er...Ron?" Hermione whispered, pointing to his shoulder. He looked down, slowly as growls grew louder. The trio turned, slowly and in fright. Bella paled even more, making her green eyes wide in her face.

She realized where they were. They weren't in a long room as she had first thought. They were in a long corridor. The forbidden third floor corridor to be exact. And now she knew why it was forbidden.

A Cerberus. An enormous black dog with three heads stood there, growling yet it's big six eyes were looking at her in shock. The saliva was dripping from it's yellow fangs and Ron moved to avoid more saliva and they backed away. It started barking, madly and the three let out screams.

Hermione groped for the doorknob and the three fell out, backwards. They worked together to slam the door shut as the middle head lunged at them. They shoved it closed and heard it click before they took off running up the moving stairs.

"No running on the staircases!" they heard the prefect shout. But they didn't stop. Once they reached the seventh floor, the Fat Lady looked at them in shock.

"Why are you out of breath?" she asked. Bella shook her head and lifted a finger to shush for a minute.

"Never mind all of that. Pig snout! Pig snout!" Bella begged. They ran in and ran up into Ron's dorm room. They looked around to find no one there and they fell into a circle on Ron's bed.

"What do they think they're doing? Keeping something like that in the school?" demanded Ron, when they had finally caught their breath. Bella shrugged.

"I don't know but I know Riddle cornered us into going in there. He wanted us to see what was in there. And all we found was a murderous dog" Bella snapped, in anger. Riddle hadn't even cared if they'd got torn apart. He had purposely done that. Bella looked at Hermione who had that sly and calculating smile once again.

"I think that he was using a tactic like Morse code but different. He can't outright tell us so he shows us. He wanted us to see that and what was under it" Hermione realized. Ron stared at her in shock.

"What are you talking about Hermione? Why would he want us to see that?" demanded Ron. Hermione sighed in annoyance and shook her head in frustration and the calculating look was gone.

"You don't use your eyes do you?" she snapped. "Didn't you see what it was standing floor?"

"Uh, the floor? Sorry but I was little more worried about it's enormous three heads. AKA one for each of us" hissed Bella, her temper flaring. Hermione sighed and shook her head. Bella's face also looked drawn and tired.

"No, first. He wanted Bella to see it. We just happened to be there and he didn't care. And, second, it was standing on a trapdoor. It was guarding something, obviously" Hermione explained. Bella nodded before freezing. She remembered something about that day that Tom and Sirius had taken her to Diagon Alley.

"We must go to Gringotts, first. I am to withdraw something rather important" he had said.

He had to withdraw something important...

"Riddle! That day when we went to Diagon Alley he made us go to Gringotts first because had to withdraw something important. That

was it! When we had come out he had stuffed a grubby package in his pocket. I didn't think it was that important so I forgot all about it!" Bella gasped. The trio exchanged looks.

"So, if it's guarded by that thing then it's either important or dangerous" Hermione said. Bella smirked and tilted her head before answering.

"Or both."

Chapter V

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 13th of September 1991

8:15 PM

"Such an unlucky day!" Bella sighed in annoyance. Hermione watched her friend in amusement as Ron stuffed his face.

"I didn't take you to believe in superstitions, Bella. Especially a Muggle superstition" Hermione laughed. Bella snorted and crossed her arms in annoyance and shrugged, slowly.

"Well, it is. Uncle Sirius told me all about them. The one I found most ridiculous is the black cat ones. Black cats make excellent familiars" Bella commented. Ron looked up suddenly and glanced at the clock. A hiss rang out, silencing the Great Hall.

"Speaker-child...speaker-child...where are you?" a hiss rang out, close to the ground. Hermione's eyes widened and she looked up, quickly.

"You're detention...you forgot" Hermione whispered. Bella shot up just as the massive snake wrapped around her leg. It made her legs heavy as the snake climbed up her. Screams erupted from all around and Dumbledore stood up.

"Miss Potter, what is happening?" Dumbledore asked, though his voice showed no alarm. He looked calm. And sad, noted Bella. He always looked sad, as if he were mourning but Bella made no comment about it.

Half the time he wasn't there in the Great Hall and no one knew why. Bella cleared her throat and stroked Nagini's head slowly.

"She's fetching me for my detention. I forgot and her master sent her after me" Bella said, carefully. Nagini settled herself on her shoulders wrapped her excess body around Bella's waist. It didn't hinder Bella's walk and she walked, carefully though her knees shaking out of the Great Hall.

"Speaker-child, you must go down to the dungeons and find the picture of the greatest of the Hogwarts Four. Your magical ancestor, Salazar Slytherin. You must ask it to open. Go down that hallway and make a left and Tom will be there. Come on," Nagini instructed. Bella nodded once in understanding and made her way down. She walked around the dungeons until she came to a picture that was unfamiliar yet familiar to her.

The man in the picture had silver hair and had the same charcoal eyes as Tom. But his eyes weren't flecked with familiar crimson. The man in the portrait sneered at her in annoyance.

"What are you doing down here, little girl?" he sneered. He noticed Nagini wrapped around her and his eyes widened. His sneer didn't let up, however. He seemed to be a master at giving one. He looked like a down right bastard pureblood, Bella noted.

"Open" hissed Bella. The man looked at her in surprise, finally losing his Merlin awful sneer and looked at her with open curiosity. His hunger for knowledge wasn't so much hunger in her eyes. He had an ambition to know all things, she could see.

"Who are you?" he demanded. Bella's eyes narrowed at him.

"Who are you?" she mocked. He glowered at her and she glared back at him, putting her hands on her hips. The man looked into her eyes before he relaxed and nodded, figuring out who she was. Bella frowned at that.

"You...I remember you. Ten years ago you came here with a man by the name of Black. The Girl-Who-Lived, Marvolo calls you" the man said, quietly. Bella's eyes widened and she frowned, slightly.

"Whose Marvolo?" she asked, confused. The man in the portrait said nothing but it did swing open. Nagini leaned in and flicked her tongue against Bella's cheek. Bella jumped but didn't object. It's not like the snake had hurt her.

"Go down the hallway and to the left, speaker-child" Nagini commanded. Bella did as she asked before entering a gold and black room. And sitting on the ebony desk was Tom. He was sitting Indian style with his eyes closed and he was breathing deeply. Bella shuddered as she felt a rush come through her with every breath.

"Come in, Miss Potter. And do stop staring. It's rude" Tom said, standing up as he came out of his meditation. Bella's jaw set and she walked in. He pointed towards the chair in front of his desk as he slid off of it and into the seat behind it before taking up a book. Bella couldn't catch the title. He began to read and for ten minutes they sat in silence. Nagini seemed to know what he was doing and she gave her snake-like laughter.

Finally, Bella couldn't hold it in anymore.

"Why am I sitting here? I'm bored! Aren't I supposed to get lines or something? Or some kind of obscene muggle task that house elves should do?" demanded Bella. Tom looked up at her with his dark eyes and she squeaked before being silenced at the look and the aristocratically raised eyebrow.

"Miss Potter, you're the last one to be asking questions. I will not have you write lines" he said, as he walked to one of his towering bookcases. He pulled down a leather book and placed the monstrously sized book in front of Bella. She looked at it as if it were a foreign object from space.

"What do you want me to do with this?" demanded Bella. Tom crossed his arms and sat back down his chair. He beckoned with one finger at her and Nagini slithered off Bella's shoulders and onto Tom's.

"You're a smart girl, Miss Potter. This is the ancient Elvish language called Druhir. I expect you to read it until your detention is over. You will take notes. It is a dictionary of every single Elvish word. You will learn the language by the time you are out of school" Tom said, as if it were plain. Bella looked at him in shock and pushed the book away.

"I'm not doing that! And why would I learn the language? Most of the Elves are dead, their descendants' blood is dormant, and the rest of the Elves that aren't dead are on the Elven Council and they're as Dark as Grindelwald!" Bella said, looking at the book with disdain. Tom raised an eyebrow and looked horribly annoyed and as if he were trying his hardest not to lose his temper.

"You'll gain knowledge that you're classmates will never know. What if the skill becomes useful in the future? With this language you could become great. You'll be recognized for accomplishing such a hard language in only seven years. Wouldn't you like that?"

The words made Bella's complaining stop and she looked at him with a curious expression. Tom kept his smirk under control and looked at her with a blank look. She looked down at the book, her hand brushing over the cover before she took a hold of the book before opening it, beginning to read.

Tom continued to read his book on the Dark Arts, though it was enchanted to look like a book on the Neutral Arts. He would never read a book on the Light Arts. That was not an option for the Dark Lord, as he knew himself to be now that Grindelwald was gone.

And as the Dark Lord he would bide his time, silently.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 13th of September 1991

9:50 PM

Tom set down the tome he had been reading for some time now before casting a tempus charm. He sighed. Bella would most definitely be out after hours if he didn't send upstairs now. But she was completely and totally immersed in the book he had given her and she watched her closely as her thin finger traced under each word she looked at. She had the quill and parchment he had given her, scratching down something every once in a while.

He had felt the urge to make her learn the language. It was important and he didn't know how yet.

He didn't like not knowing things.

In actuality, it infuriated him. It infuriated him to know that the little girl in front of him had defeated his teacher. His mentor. The great Grindelwald. He leaned back and inspected the girl and she didn't even feel his eyes on her.

How pathetically inadequate! She was nothing special. Nothing at all. Her face was horribly pale and plain, her black hair untamable and she was easily manipulated, it seemed.

Did she not know that he would one day avenge his teacher? And no one would stop him. Dumbledore couldn't stand in his way. Not with all that grief bottled up inside the old fool. He was still mourning his long lost lover. And the damned Order of the Phoenix couldn't stand without its equally pathetic leader. And so no one stood in his way.

"Miss Potter, one word please and then you may leave" Tom said, abruptly. Bella looked up and grabbed parchment with her scrawled cursive on it. She placed it down, intent not to even look at it as she scrunched up her nose, trying to think of a word. As she brushed her hair out of her eyes, her fingers froze on her forehead and she pointed at that stupid scar, the only remnant of her encounter with the Killing Curse.

"Kveykva" she said, touching it. Tom looked at the scar and nodded. The shape of a lightning bolt, indeed. At his confirming nod, Bella's eyes lit up and she folded the parchment neatly before tucking it in her robes.

"You may go, Miss Potter" Tom said, taking the large dictionary from where she had been sitting. He watched as she looked at it, longingly as he placed it back on the shelf. She sighed and turned around, walking out of the door.

"Miss Potter."

The green-eyed turned around eagerly, her eyes suddenly unnaturally bright with ambition. Her eyes were no longer emerald in color but the sickly green light of the curse that had ended her parents' lives. The spark was suddenly gone and Tom couldn't say he wasn't disappointed.

He had wanted to inspect what had caused the sudden change in her. He decided to Legilimency on her more often. It was something that needed to be done if she was going through such sudden mood swings that caused her to look touched in the head.

"Yes, Professor?" asked Bella. Tom's eyes widened, infinitesimally. It was the most polite she had ever been with him. He had gotten used to her sass.

"Detention. Tomorrow. You showed up late. Bring more parchment, ink, and a quill" Tom said. Bella nodded, ecstatically.

"Yes, sir. Of course, sir" she said, before scurrying off. Tom watched after her as her potent magic left with her. He sighed as it left before glaring at the wall.

"Poor magical control, too" he decided before going back to grading the homework he had given out.

He'd be sure to give her an E for all the work she had gotten done in the span of less than two hours.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 20th of October 1991

8:15 AM

The day after Hermione's 12th birthday brought a gift and three letters. But not for the birthday girl. They were for her best friend, Bella. As Bella at her daily porridge, a hoard of owls came to drop a long and thin package right in front of Bella. Bella stared in shock as another owl dropped a letter on top of it. A smaller owl came and dropped another letter on top of the parcel and the other letter.

"What is all this?" Bella asked in wonder at the many letters she got.

"Look at all the letters and packages! What does this one say?" Hermione asked. She plucked up the first letter and ripped it open. Bella didn't mind as Hermione read it and then handed it over to her. She was glad Hermione had opened the letter first. She had almost ripped it open first in excitement. The letter read:

DO NOT OPEN THE PARCEL AT THE TABLE!

It contains your new Nimbus Two Thousand, but I don't want everybody knowing you've got a broomstick or they'll all want one.

Oliver Wood will meet you tonight on the Quidditch field as seven o'clock for your first training session.

Professor McGonagall

Ron read it after she had and he looked at her in shock before shaking his head.

"A Nimbus Two Thousand! I've never even touched one" Ron moaned, enviously.

The next letter was a letter from Hagrid inviting Bella and her friends to tea.

Suddenly, there was a bird-like cackling sound as a massive black eagle flew towards Bella with a parcel. It dropped in front of her and looked like it was aiming for her head. She stuck out her arm, remembering all the times Ted Tonks had lectured her on animals. It landed and its talons pierced her robes and scratched at her skin but didn't puncture it.

The bird seemed disappointed that it hadn't.

Bella looked at the bird and admired its glossy black feathers. It made the cackling sound again before jutting its head at her, expecting something. Hermione stared at the beautiful bird in wonder before speaking in quieter Hall. The Hall wasn't silent but it was much quieter.

"It wants food" Hermione said. Bella stiffened as she felt familiar magic brush against her own, telling her to let the bird go and she offered a smile to her friends to reassure them that she knew what she was doing.

"Your master will feed you. Go on" Bella commanded. The bird spread its wings, the feathers brushing in Bella's messy ponytail. Even while Hermione looked closely, she couldn't see where the Girl-Who-Lived's hair ended and the feather began.

As soon as the bird took off, the Hall resumed its normal volume. Bella's eyes never left the swooping animal and how it landed on Tom Riddle's arm. He nodded towards her and his eyes searched

for the parcel that had been delivered. Hermione looked at him curiously.

"Why—" she started. Ron let out a rude belch and he snickered at it. Hermione glared at him, annoyed that she had been interrupted.

"Why would he deliver you something?" Hermione asked. Bella didn't answer right away as she opened up the parcel, slowly. A note fluttered out first.

Potter,

You're wasting parchment. You're a moron for not thinking to buy a book. Copy the information into the notebook and bring it tomorrow to detention.

Don't give me your sass about what you did to deserve a detention. But knowing you...five points from Gryffindor.

You have detention for your idiocy. You know where to go. 8:00 sharp or I'll send Nagini after you. Not a word about what it's for or 40 points.

Professor Riddle

Bella burst into giggles while she scowled as she read over the note and shook her head. She unwrapped the parcel all the way and ran a finger over the black cover. At the bottom were her initials in silver and the empty book was most definitely old-fashioned. The pages were cut jaggedly.

"Why did he send you a notebook?" demanded Hermione. Bella shared the note before fingering the book, lovingly. Before groaning in annoyance. She glared, viciously at Tom before he smirked and raised five fingers. Five more rubies disappeared from the hourglass with red rubies.

"I...I have to rewrite everything..." Bella groaned. Hermione looked at her, angrily but didn't ask again what it was for. The trio stood up to go open the broomstick in privacy. Their path to the stairwell was blocked by two morons and a prat. The Malfoy heir seized the broomstick from Bella's hand and felt it.

"That's a broomstick! You'll be in for it this time, Potter. First years aren't allowed" Malfoy said, almost in sing song. Bella glared at him but said nothing as the blonde boy tossed it back to him.

"That's not any broomstick, Malfoy! It's a Nimbus Two Thousand. What did you say you had at home? A Comet Two Sixty? They're nowhere near the Nimbus' league" Ron said, smirking. Malfoy sneered and glared.

"Stop! You'll get us in trouble..." Hermione whispered as Ron and Bella got angrier. They completely ignored the girl as Malfoy responded.

"What would know about broomsticks, Weasley? I doubt you could afford the handle of a Cleansweep One. Don't speak to me, blood traitor" Malfoy sniffed. Bella stepped forward, her fist clenched.

"What's that supposed to mean? Ron's a pureblood. I'm a half-blood. You want say something to me?" Bella demanded. Malfoy's silvery eyes looked around for anyone but saw no one of importance.

"I've many things to say to you, Potter. You live with that disowned Uncle of yours who obviously didn't teach you anything about being a proper pureblood witch. But you are her" Malfoy said. Hermione's eyes narrowed.

"What do you mean her?" she asked. Malfoy rolled his eyes at her before crossing his arms.

"So you didn't tell your friends? Pitiful. You're magic practically screams Dark. And you're unnatural talent? Didn't tell them that either? You seriously don't know?" Malfoy demanded. Bella glanced at friends, nervously.

"What is he talking about, Bella? Dark?" Ron asked, nervously. Hermione touched her shoulder and frowned.

"Unnatural talent?"

"Nothing. It's nothing. Malfoy, shut up!" Bella snapped. Malfoy smirked at her, knowing he had her in a bad position.

"What? You don't want the school to know that Bella Potter is Lady S—" he was cut off as Bella kicked him in the shin. He let out a shout in pain before she jabbed him in the stomach with her elbow. He leaned forward and almost crumpled. Crabbe grabbed him and Bella panicked.

"Come on, come on—shit..." Bella whispered as a familiar hand laid itself on her shoulder. Tom tilted his head and smirked.

"Muggle fighting, Miss Potter?" Tom asked. Hermione stared in shock as Bella crossed her arms and shrugged his arm off.

"Yeah, yeah. I know, I know. Detention. When?" Bella asked. Tom looked up at the ceiling as he tried to think of a date that she didn't already have detention with him. She was rather open with her cheek in class so she was used to the constant detentions and it wasn't as if she didn't do anything productive.

"November 1st. Mr. Malfoy will be joining you" Tom clarified. Malfoy and Bella looked at him in shock and frowned.

"But...but he's annoying!" whined Bella. Ron and Hermione gasped as she hissed out the last one and Bella flinched as she realized she had slipped. Tom looked accomplished.

"Nonetheless, he wasn't in liberty to try to blackmail and reveal people's privacy. Mr. Malfoy, November 1st. Bring something to read. Miss Potter will be too occupied to deal with your antics" Tom said before walking away.

"Salazar was right...you are a jackass, Marvolo" Bella snapped to herself. Tom turned around and sneered at her, in annoyance.

"Do speak a little lower, Miss Potter. Two more detentions. One for calling me a jackass. And another for calling me, Marvolo" Tom said. The girl had the nerve to be annoyed at him.

He was planning to give her a merciful death.

"I wasn't talking to you!" Bella said in disbelief. Tom walked away, not even speaking to her and went down to the dungeons. Bella glared at him and Tom smirked. He looked back and his eyes widened as he caught sight of the Killing Curse green eyes. Dark

magic stirred in her and it was powerful. She sneered back at him and Tom felt angry at the show of disrespect.

He had changed his mind. He was going to torture in the most painful way before killing her because of her blatant disrespect.

Because Lord Voldemort didn't do merciful.

"Are you going to tell us why you called a professor a 'jackass'?" demanded Hermione in anger. Bella paled at her furious tone and Ron rolled his eyes.

"Are you going to tell us why you're a bloody Parseltongue?" demanded Ron. Bella paled.

"Later."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 20th of October 1991

6:30 PM

The trio sat in the comfort of the quiet library in front of a fireplace as they looked at Bella expectantly.

"Look, I'm a Parseltongue," Bella sighed in defeat. Ron snorted and glared at her.

"Obviously. All Dark wizards are Parseltongues" Ron snapped. Bella looked at him in alarm and glared at him.

"I swear I'm not a Dark wizard! Professor Riddle is the Heir of Slytherin. I'm somehow the magical Heiress or something. I gained some of the bloodline traits, thus Parseltongue. I'm the Girl-Who-Lived and in Gryffindor. How could I be Dark?" Bella said, unwittingly manipulating the boy sitting in front of her. Hermione watched with narrowed eyes.

"Manipulative girl..." the bushy haired witch murmured to herself before blinking and admonishing said girl for not telling the truth.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 20th of October 1991

7:00 PM

Bella walked outside, alone. She looked around at the enormous stadium. She had never been in the open Quidditch pitch and she couldn't stop herself from gaping. Her mouth fell open and she snapped it close, suddenly.

She could imagine a snide remark from Riddle and him snapping at her, 'Close your mouth. And stop looking like a moron while you're at it...if you can'. This left a scowl on her face that cleared up as soon as she glanced down at her broom. She looked around and didn't see Wood anywhere.

Clearly, he was late and Bella couldn't stand lateness, a trait she had always had. Her Uncle Sirius was far too late all the time. She swung her leg up onto the broom before shooting off. She almost fell at the intense speed. This was much faster than the school brooms that she had used during her lessons. She swooped in around the hoops and laughed loudly in excitement.

The wind blew her hair wildly and she spun in circles when she finally saw Wood stumbling out of the castle with a large chest and looking up at her as she flew. She flew behind the stands before diving, completely vertically, her legs wrapped around the slim broomstick before pulling back sharply. She landed in front of him with a grin on her face.

"Nice...let's see what you can do..." he commented before releasing the snitch.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 31st of October 1991

8:25 AM

Bella, Ron, and Hermione had come downstairs to the smell of pumpkin bread that morning. Bella breathed in deeply the scent

drifting from the Great Hall. At the door she almost slammed into Quirrell, the Muggle Studies Teacher, and Tom. As she glanced at Quirrell, his eyes narrowed at her as if he were studying her. Bella turned towards Tom before clearing her throat.

"Good morning, Miss Potter" Tom said, looking at her amusedly. She nodded and bowed her head. She waved Ron and Hermione forward as they looked at her in interest.

"G-g-good m-m-morning, M-miss P-p-potter" Quirrell stuttered. Bella refused to frown at the stutter. There was something off about it but she couldn't quite tell what it was.

"Good morning, Professor Quirrell" Bella said. Tom crossed his arms as if expecting something from her.

"Quirrell go on. Miss Potter has something to say to me. Today is Samhain, Miss Potter. What do you say?" Tom asked. Bella bit her lip and tilted her head as she thought about what he wanted from her. It wasn't obvious before she nodded.

"Err...Good morning, sir?" Bella half-asked. Tom's eyes narrowed and he lifted an eyebrow at the girl and shook his head in annoyance. Bella glared at him but didn't say anything about the open disdain he was looking at her with.

"First, wrong language. Second, stop sounding like a moron. When you're saying something make sure it's not a question. If it sounds like one it makes it seem like you're asking me. You're not. You're giving a statement. Make it sound like one" Tom snapped. Bella nodded and tried to remember exactly what he was trying to make her say. The words drifted back to her easily.

"Kvertha, Riddle eltha. Esterní vil thronessa Dagshelger. Is that correct, sir?" Bella asked. Tom tilted his head and considered what she had said.

Greetings, Riddle of the highest praise. Good fortune upon this Hallowed Day.

"It is adequate. I will give you this day free but tomorrow you will learn all the material planned for today. Remind, Mr. Malfoy, of your

joint detention" Tom said, sharply. Bella nodded and walked to breakfast, leaving her somewhat favorite professor behind.

"What was that about?" Ron asked as Bella had her daily porridge. She poured herself pumpkin juice and took a gulp from wiping at her mouth with her napkin, almost viciously.

"Oh nothing. Just wishing, Professor Riddle a Happy Halloween."

The day went out excellently for Bella. In Charms, Flitwick had announced, rather excitedly, that he believed that they were ready to make things fly. Bella had been dying to try ever since she had saw him make Neville Longbottom's toad fly across the room and she was rather eager to try it. Flitwick put the group in pairs and Bella sighed at her unfortunate luck. She was stuck with Lavender Brown, a boy-crazy girl for her age. And Ron, to his misfortune, was paired with Hermione. They took turns giving each other nasty glares before Hermione looked at him with a haughty Slytherin sneer and turned away to pay attention to Flitwick.

"Now, remember the wrist movement we've been practicing! Swish and flick" Flitwick squeaked. Bella was surprised to find it slightly difficult. Doing the movement and saying the spell seemed wrong to her. She was trying to force her magic through when Lavender began gabbing.

"You know who I think is the most attractive teacher? Do you?" she asked. Bella sent her a look, as if already knowing what she was going to say.

"No, I don't, Lavender. Wingardium Leviosa" Bella said in a bored tone, swishing her wand lazily. She was obviously not in the mood for this and Lavender acted as if she had said the most interesting thing on the world. Bella sighed in annoyance as Lavender leaned in, over their feather.

"Professor Riddle. He is so hot" Lavender squealed. Bella's magic spiked before calming down and once again, cowering against the spell.

"Is that so? Well you don't have detention with him everyday. Wingardium Leviosa" Bella said, monotonously. Lavender began

speaking again about how jealous she was of Bella for that and Bella turned to look at Hermione and Ron.

Ron was having trouble and Hermione was noticing.

"Wingardium Leviosa" Ron said, waving his wand like a windmill. Hermione grabbed his arm and thrust it down with force. He flinched at the strength she had used and looked at her in shock. She obviously look angered.

"Stop. Stop. Stop! You're saying it all wrong. And you could've taken my eye out. If you're competent enough, say it right. It's Wing-gar-dium Levi-o-sa. Make the 'gar' nice and long before you go around waving your arm like a deranged person from St. Mungo's" Hermione hissed in anger. Ron looked at her in shock before glaring at her.

"Then you do it if you're so clever" Ron spat at her. She gave him another haughty look that looked like it belonged on the face of a pureblood.

"Wingardium Leviosa" she said calmly as she flicked her wand in the precise movement. The feather went up though it seemed unwillingly. Bella watched in interest as the feather floated four feet above their heads.

"Well done, Miss Granger. Ten points to Gryffindor!" Flitwick said, excitedly. Bella turned back to see Lavender still talking and her mood darkened for the rest of class as she was stuck with listening to Lavender and she wasn't able to make the damned feather float.

As they left the classroom, Ron's mood was as foul as ever. Hermione had stayed back in the classroom to ask Flitwick something. She had urged the two ahead to their next class, as she didn't want to make them late.

"Merlin! It's no wonder no one can stand her. She's a right nightmare, honestly" Ron complained rather loudly. Bella stopped where she stood and stared at him in shock but was pushed past by someone. Bella watched in horror as Hermione passed. She was surprised to see, not tears of sadness, but tears of pure rage in her eyes and she could've sworn her eyes had flashed black before returning to it's chocolate brown.

"How could you Ron?" she demanded. Ron looked thoroughly uncomfortable now, having seen Hermione. He had wrongly assumed that she had been crying because of his insults.

"I was just saying the truth. I didn't think she was there!" Ron protested. Bella had stormed away and refused to talk to him for the rest of the day. She had heard from Parvarti that she had seen Hermione crying in the bathroom but she never specified where and it was hard for Bella to find the girl in between classes.

The Potter girl was worried that the normally studious girl didn't come for any class that afternoon and she wasn't seen during dinner either. Ron had decided to sit by her and try to talk to her as if nothing happened but Bella only responded with short-clipped answers.

She had been helping herself to a baked potato when Quirrell had burst through the halls and he looked absolutely terrified.

"Troll! In the dungeon...thought you wanted to know" he shrieked as he fell in front of Dumbledore and Tom. Tom's face paled but his eyes portrayed amusement as Quirrell sank to the floor in a dead faint.

And then the screaming started.

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A/N: I've noticed that so many people read the story (I look at traffic) but no one is REVIEWING. I actually like reviews. And not the crap telling me to 'update soon' because I won't be updating right after I receive the damn review. It's going to take me a while to actually write up the next chapter.

So could I get a few reviews that actually tell me what you like about the story? I'd really like to know. Only one or two people tell me what they actually like about the chapter and I really appreciate them. I wish I could appreciate other people (hint, hint).

Chapter VI

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 31st of October 1991

8:10 PM

The screaming erupted and Dumbledore stood up just as Tom had. Dumbledore murmured something to Tom and he nodded before jumping over the table, gracefully and sprinting down the aisle and out of the Great Hall. Bella thought she saw a smirk on his face as he passed her but it was gone in the next second. Dumbledore touched the tip of his wand to his throat before murmuring an incantation.

"SILENCE!" he rumbled. The screams quieted almost instantly, ending with an audible squeak as they jumped at his roar.

"Prefects, lead your Houses back to dormitories immediately!" Dumbledore commanded. Percy stood up almost immediately and he was in element. Percy gathered everyone together.

"Follow me! Stick close, first years! No need to fear a troll if you follow my orders! Stay close behind me. Excuse me, first years coming through!" Percy said, herding the younger students first. Ron slipped in beside Bella.

"How could a troll get in? Isn't Hogwarts supposed to be one of the safest places in all of the Wizarding World?" snapped Bella in annoyance. She couldn't help feel a whole nagging feeling about the situation.

"Don't ask me. Trolls are really stupid. Maybe the ghost-thing, Peeves let it in" Ron said with a carefree shrug. Bella rolled her eyes at his stupidity. But she realized it wasn't exactly stupidity. It was merely his ignorance. He didn't know that Hogwarts wouldn't let Peeves let a troll in if it was a mere joke. Hogwarts was alive and she did things for a purpose. She was doing something...

"Peeves is a poltergeist, Ron and...Hermione" Bella whispered, her eyes suddenly wide with terror. Ron froze and looked at him in shock before shrugging.

"What about her?"

"She doesn't know about the troll, moron!" Bella snapped. She flinched when she realized that she sounded like Tom but brushed it off. It must've been all the detentions that she attended with him there.

"Oh, uh, well...all right, fine! But Percy'd better not see us" Ron snapped before they crept forward and Bella tapped Parvarti on the shoulder. The Indian girl spun around, her eyes round in fright.

"Er, Parvarti, which bathroom did you see Hermione in earlier?" Bella asked, rather awkwardly. Parvarti didn't even seem to consider why she was asking and spouted out the answer in a timid voice. Bella rolled her eyes at the girl's naivety before Ron and her took off down the hallways. Suddenly, Ron jerked her back as he prepared to turn down another corridor.

"Stop, Percy!" Ron hissed, quietly. But they didn't see Percy. They saw Snape and Tom. They seemed to be arguing near the third floor corridor. Tom caught sight of her and he grabbed Snape's left arm and squeezed on his forearm. Snape cried out in pain and Tom jerked his head at the other corridor, the way to the Gryffindor Tower, and Bella snorted and went the other way, nearer to the dungeons. Bella pulled Ron along as Tom watched, his eyes horrified.

"What was that about? Why was a professor trying to make us go back to Gryffindor Tower?" demanded Ron. Bella looked at him and rolled her eyes at his ignorance once again.

"Really, Ron? He's a teacher. And the Deputy Headmaster. I doubt he wants a dead student," Bella explained. Suddenly, they could the scent of a foul stench coming from the corridor they had just gone down. They heard the heavy footfalls of something extremely heavy and dense.

And then they saw it. It was twelve feet tall with sickening grey skin. A coconut-sized head that made the body seem disgustingly disproportionate topped the great lumpy boulder of a body. The short legs that held up the body were as thick as tree trunks. It dragged a massive wooden club with it. It walked into a room and Ron pointed at the door.

"The key is in the lock! We can lock it in!" Ron said, excitedly. Bella shook her head slowly as she realized what room the disgusting creature had wandered into and she made a choked sound.

"That's the girls' bathroom...HERMIONE!" Bella shrieked as a scream sounded. Bella ran as fast as she could and kicked the door open. The floor was wet and she skidded across the floor, her flyaway hair touching the water as she bent backwards to avoid a wayward swing of a wooden club. Hermione was standing near the sinks, her wand pointed at the troll.

"Confuse it, Ron!" Bella shouted. Hermione and Bella stood together and raised their wand as Ron seized a tap and threw it against the wall. The troll's beady little eyes searched for the source of the sound but instead found Ron.

"Go, Hermione. I'll take care of this" Bella said. Hermione snorted at her and looked at her as if she was crazy.

"I'm not leaving, Bella. I may be Muggleborn but I'm neither stupid nor helpless. I'm not sad or scared. I'm angry. So let me take out my anger in a controlled way, dammit!" Hermione shrieked. Bella's eye twitched but she nodded and crossed her arms as the troll stalked up to Ron, dragging its massive and horny feet.

"Any help over here?" Ron demanded, his voice shaking ever so slightly.

"But I thought I was a nightmare? Why should I help you?" Hermione sneered. Ron shook his head and looked at Bella in horror. Bella seemed to be in a different world completely. She was going through her past knowledge, trying to figure out if Sirius had ever told her how to stop a troll.

"I'm sorry! Granger...no, Hermione, I'm sorry! I was being a bloody git like Malfoy. I'm sorry!" confessed Ron. Hermione smirked at him and pointed her wand at the troll.

"Apology accepted. Confringo!" Hermione said. The troll was hit by the powerful spell as it was fueled by burning magic. The troll stumbled back but got back up almost immediately before roaring anger and throwing his club everywhere. It crashed into the

porcelain sinks, creating debris. It swung its club directly at Bella. She dodged, skidding across the water, splashing water all over herself. Hermione was cornered and she slid in between the troll's legs, gracefully. She watching it and it roared at her. Hermione gave a fearsome snarl and her eyes darkened in rage. Her whites were not visible anymore and Bella could see that she looked like someone she had once seen...

Maybe in a dream...

"Hmm...what's that spell I read about? It's Dark but seeing the circumstances..." Hermione murmured. Ron didn't seem to hear her, as he didn't stare at her as if he had never seen her before and hadn't tried to chew her out right then and there. Suddenly, the troll grabbed Bella and swung her like a rag doll. Bella shrieked and pointed at Ron as Hermione stood, trying to figure out what to do.

"Do the damn spell! Make the 'gar' nice and long!" Bella screamed. Ron pointed his wand.

"Wingard—" he started.

"SECTUMSEMPRA!" an angry voice roared. Angry slashes ripped across the troll's body, creating deep, deep, deep gashes that bled black. The troll fell limp and Bella fell when two strong arms caught her. She looked up to see a pair of blood red eyes looking down at her furiously.

"Er...fuck..." Bella whispered. Tom looked down at her his expression livid. His jaw was clenched tightly. His nose flared and his eyes were wide with rage and anger. He sneered at her.

"You...you...WHAT THE BLOODY HELL DO YOU THINK YOU WERE DOING?" Tom raged. Bella looked past him to see McGonagall, Snape, Dumbledore, and Quirrell staring in shock. Tom never swore.

Ever.

He placed Bella down, harshly, all but dropping her. She took a step back and Tom mirrored the step by stepping forward and grabbing her by her arm, his wand clutched in his hand. Bella raised her wand at him and looked at him with wide eyes. He was beyond

angry and she was terrified that he would hurt her right then and there.

"Leave me alone. I don't care if I'm expelled. I'll kill you, right here and now. I know the spell" Bella whispered, harshly. Tom snorted and glared at her.

"You can't do a thing, little girl. I'm the most powerful wizard in the world" Tom hissed, in anger. Bella glared at him and shook her head and thrust a finger at Dumbledore who looked at her in shock.

"No. He is!" Bella said, in anger. Tom screamed and then everything in the room went cold. He let out a high-pitched and cold laugh that sounded nothing like him and Bella repressed a shudder. The sound sounding so wrong.

"Dumbledore is a filthy Muggle lover and is weak! He's weak! Just. Like. You! I am the greatest wizard in the world and no little girl will tell me otherwise" Tom hissed at her. Bella took a step back and Dumbledore started forward.

"My boy, that is enough. You're scaring her" Dumbledore said, firmly. He placed a wizened hand on Tom's shoulder and Tom jerked away with force and glared at the old man.

"Dumbledore, she deliberately disobeyed me and apprehended the troll. I told her to go to Gryffindor Tower and she went to find the girl anyway" Tom hissed through clenched teeth as he tried to calm himself. Dumbledore nodded, benignly.

"I understand, Tom. But she is still just a child" Dumbledore said, quietly. Tom lips curled and his fist was clenched.

"She's the Heiress of Slytherin. I punish her anyway, I see fit. I am her magical guardian" Tom snapped. Dumbledore was at a loss as Tom raised his wand at Bella. Bella looked panicked before a spell floated into her mind.

"Expelliarmus" she snapped.

"Stupefy!" Tom responded. Suddenly, the golden light erupted from the end of Bella's wand and connected with Tom's. Dumbledore's

eyes widened. Ron, Hermione, and Snape watched as magic swirled from each person in wonder.

"Albus...is that..." McGonagall said. Dumbledore nodded.

"Prior Incantatem."

This time instead of several colors coming out, white and crimson magic erupted from Bella. Black and emerald exploded from Tom and warred against each other. Bella looked at Tom.

"For a teacher, you're sure mad that I almost got killed" Bella hissed. Tom glared at her as she jeered at him. She was baiting him and he knew it. She didn't expect him to rise to it but he did.

"You must learn your place, child. If you would have died it would've ruined all my plans, nitwit."

"What plans?" Bella asked, curiously as their magic continued to roar around them and Tom tried to jerk his wand away.

"I'm exceedingly angry at you and you think it's safe to ask that. Do you have no preservation skills? Apologize for being a moron. I thought I had taught you how not to do that. Obviously, you don't want to learn Druhir" Tom growled at her. Bella stopped and spun in a circle, her robes swirling with her. The connection snapped as she and Tom pulled away. Bella fell to her knees, her magic drained.

"I'm sorry. Please don't take that away from me. I'm sorry" Bella murmured before passing out from magical drainage.

As her eyes slid closed she heard a voice above her.

"I suppose I could forgive you this once."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 1st of November 1991

7:45 AM

Bella shot up, gasping as her magical core awoke. She blinked away the blurriness in her eyes to see Tom Riddle sitting next to her. His legs were crossed and he was meditating.

"What are you doing here?" demanded Bella, harshly. Tom opened one eyes to look at her and tilted his head.

"50 points were taken from Gryffindor. You were each given 15 points for keeping the troll occupied and not dying. You have detention for the next two weeks. The first week and a half with me. The second half of the second week will be with the oaf...I mean, Hagrid" Tom said, quietly. Bella rolled her eyes and shrugged before shifting, her back to him.

"As if I didn't know that already. I probably have had more detentions than my Uncle and my Dad put together" Bella said, quietly. She curled in on herself and Tom couldn't help but notice how her dark hair spread across the pillow. Her hair looked dirty, according to him.

"Most likely, that is the case."

"I remember Ollivander saying you were old. Did you teach my parents?" asked Bella, curiously. Tom seemed to be surprised by the question and he looked very far away all of a sudden.

"No...I was traveling. I was learning from my teacher. And I'm not old, brat" Tom said, annoyed that she had called him old. Bella snorted and rolled her eyes but didn't push it. Suddenly, her eyes narrowed.

"What do you want? You already took away the language. Want to rub it in?" Bella asked in suspicion. There was a soft chuckling that seemed somewhat forced and Bella glanced over at him over her shoulder. He was watching her with dark eyes. They were no longer that furious crimson and Bella took that for a good sign.

"I am not a child, Bella. I did not come here to as you eloquently put it, 'rub it in'. I came here for an entirely different reason" Tom said, quietly. Bella shifted again until she was facing him and tilted her head.

"What for, then?" asked Bella. Tom sighed and shook his head.

"I don't know. But, I apologize for losing my temper with you" Tom said, earnestly. Bella nodded.

"I should've listened. I could've gotten killed. I'm sure McGonagall...I mean Professor McGonagall will be here to chew me out soon" Bella said, quietly. As if on cue the door to the Hospital Wing opened to reveal Professor McGonagall standing in the doorway, waiting for an audience with the Girl-Who-Lived.

"Tom? I thought you were still angry with Albus" McGonagall said. Tom stood up and shook his head, suddenly looking very tired.

"No longer. You do not need to worry. I will be off. Remember, Miss Potter, remind Mr. Malfoy of your joint punishment" Tom said. He stood fluidly. Bella watched as he walked away, his midnight blue robes billowing after him.

"Professor, I'm sorry. I really am" Bella said, falling back against her pillow. McGonagall nodded and shook her head.

"It is fine, Miss Potter. Miss Granger told me what happened" McGonagall said. Bella looked at her in surprise and tilted her head.

"She did?" the green eyed girl asked. She couldn't imagine Hermione of all people admitting to a teacher that Ron had made her angry. That she had skipped all of her classes.

"Yes. The girl was foolish, going after the troll herself. Only because she read about them...hmm. I came to tell you that she was immensely worried about you and if you are up to it, to meet her in your dormitory to freshen up and ready for your classes" McGonagall said. Bella nodded and stood. She noticed that her sopping wet robes were gone and she was left in her white shirt that was dry, thank goodness, and her skirt. She slipped on her shoes and picked up her tie before following McGonagall to the seventh floor in silence.

"You're okay!" Hermione gasped when she saw Bella walk into the dormitory. Hermione threw her arms around the girl and Bella hugged her back tightly. Hermione pulled away and glared at Bella, reproachfully.

"You had better be glad that I lied for you! Lying to a teacher...my parents would be so ashamed" Hermione moaned in anguish. Bella could only laugh and suffer another one of Hermione's glares.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 1st of November 1991

8:17 PM

Bella was running down the halls and to the dungeon from Hagrid's hut...er cabin. She couldn't find Malfoy anywhere so she had assumed that Tom had gone and fetched him when he remembered that the easiest way to actually get to his office was by speaking in Parseltongue. As she slammed into his office, the pale headed boy and the dark haired man looked up. Draco was writing lines and smirking at her for being late.

"You're late, Miss Potter" Tom said, amusedly.

"Err...sorry, Professor. I was looking for Malfoy and he wasn't around and I had...you know...Quidditch practice" Bella said, awkwardly. Tom sighed and nodded gesturing to the room and the book that was waiting for her. Tom wasn't sitting behind his desk as usual. He was sitting in the armchair that Bella usually studied at. Bella sat cross-legged by the side of the chair and thanked Merlin that she was wearing trousers.

"Potter, why are you sitting on the floor like a servant?" Malfoy spat. Bella sneered at him and rolled her eyes.

"Would you shut up? I have something that's actually important to do" Bella hissed as she brought out her leather bound book, quill, and inkwell. She set it to the side before crossing to the bookcase and tiptoeing. She sighed when she realized she couldn't reach it before it floated down to her. She looked over to see Tom, still reading the stack of parchment in his lap, pointing his wand at the bookcase, lazily.

"Thanks" she murmured. He nodded in response and she sat down next to his chair and began to read. She could feel Malfoy's curious eyes on her and she almost smirked as she copied down and translated the various sentences the book gave her.

She sat there for almost an hour when a piece of parchment hit her in the face. She looked up in alarm and saw Malfoy looking at her, his silvery eyes glancing between her and the parchment. She rolled her eyes and pointed at her wand.

"Incendio" she whispered. The parchment erupted into fire and turned to ash before she got up and placed it on Malfoy's parchment. He glowered at her as he realized that he would have to rewrite all the lines Tom had set him.

Soon the time had flown by and Tom looked up. He looked over at Malfoy and cleared his throat.

"Mr. Malfoy, what have you learned?" Tom asked. Malfoy looked at him, very confused and Bella didn't want him to come back. According to Tom, if you didn't get the lesson the first time, that meant that a second detention was in order.

"Read what your lines say" Bella mouthed. Malfoy cleared his throat and looked down at his lines.

"I will not instigate problems with Gryffindors. I will mind my own business" Malfoy said. Bella snorted and Malfoy gave her a nasty look. Tom's hand found itself on top of Bella's head before giving her a hard smack on the back of said head. Malfoy smirked as her head jolted forward.

"Miss Potter, you will mind your own business as well. Tell me what you learned" Tom commanded. Bella crossed her arms.

"Malfoy weohnata fir" Bella hissed in annoyance. Tom smirked and Malfoy's eyes widened as he recognized exactly what language she was speaking in.

"That wasn't nice. You shouldn't say 'Malfoy will die'. Mr. Malfoy, you should know that no one knows that Bella is learned Druhir. No one will learn this fact. Is that understood?" asked Tom in a cold voice. Malfoy nodded and gulped.

"Yes, sir..." he said, quietly. Bella stood up as she finished packing and dropped the large book on Tom's lap before saluting to him.

"See you tomorrow night!" she said, before walking away, her bag casually slung over her shoulder. She stopped by Nagini who was lounging on the desk before plopping a carefree kiss on the snake's head before walking out. Malfoy stared after her in shock before Tom gestured to the door. Malfoy walked out as quickly as he could without running. He caught up with Bella just as she reached the portrait.

"What was that? You're learning Druhir? Why?" Malfoy demanded. Bella crossed her arms and her eyes narrowed.

"None of your business, Malfoy. I have places to be and things to do so can we hurry this up? You're kind of, what is it? Oh yeah, wasting my time" Bella said, bored. Malfoy glared at her at her blatant disrespect.

"I want answers. Now" Malfoy said, quietly. Bella snorted and crossed her arms.

"Maybe it's time you earned them instead of demanding them. You should know by now that I don't like to follow the rules and I don't like the thought of authority and order. Goodbye, Malfoy" Bella said before walking out of the hallway without another word.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 9th of November 1991

10:50 PM

Bella slid her Quidditch wear on in the tent, hiding from the people that had somehow found out that she was seeker for the Gryffindor team. She was sick and tired of hearing them congratulate her or tell her that they hoped she didn't fall off her broom and were betting on her.

She remembered what she had found out yesterday after Snape had taken her book away.

She could remember Snape's bloody and mangled leg where a distinct bite mark was. Filch had been helping him wrap his leg up and Bella couldn't help but wonder why he had not just gone to Madame Pomfrey. She always offered to help.

"Blasted thing. How are you supposed to keep your eyes on all three heads at once?" Snape had muttered. That was all Bella had had to hear before running off to relay what she had heard to Hermione and Ron.

Her conversation with him wasn't enlightening...

"Did you get your book back?" Ron had asked, when she had found them. She'd shook her head before relaying exactly what she'd heard.

"You see? That was what he was trying to get past on Halloween. And Professor Riddle stopped him from stealing whatever it's guarding. And I bet he let the troll in too!"

"No...no...it doesn't make sense. It just doesn't. There is someone else" Hermione had said, quietly. Ron had taken what she had said the wrong way entirely and glared at her.

"Honestly, Hermione, you think all teachers are saints? I'm with Bella. I wouldn't put it past Snape to try something like that. Serves him right to be bitten" Ron had snapped and that was the end of it. Hermione had refused to go from her theory that she seemed so set in.

Bella sighed as she slipped on her final layer of clothing. She wore red and gold robes with a red and gold shrug over it. Black dragon hide pants covered her legs and dark crimson boots of dragon hide covered her feet. She grabbed her broom after pulling her hair up in a ponytail and walked outside into the main tent. The team was there and she was easily the smallest of the bunch.

"Okay, men" Wood said.

"And women" Angelina Johnson coughed.

"And women. This is it" Wood agreed.

"The big one" Fred added to boost the low excitement level.

"The one we've all been waiting for" George said, helping his twin out. Bella gave them a quizzical look. They sounded as if they were reciting something now.

"We know Oliver's speech by heart. We were on the team last year" Fred explained. George smiled as Wood looked annoyed.

"Shut up. This is the best team Gryffindor has had in years. We're going to win this. I know it" Wood said.

They walked outside and the cheers got louder as the Gryffindors stepped out. Most of the three houses that they weren't going against cheered for them. The Slytherins threw scathing boos and hisses.

"Now I want a nice fair game" Madam Hooch said. She was refereeing the game and she seemed to be speaking, specifically, to Marcus Flint. He was the Slytherin Captain, and a sixth year. His pimply face held a feral grin.

"Mount your brooms!" commanded Madam Hooch. Bella swung her leg over hers and she crossed her legs over the broom, plastering it to her body, vertically so she was still standing. She knew people were looking at her strangely but she didn't care. All she cared about seeing was that glint of gold. Madam Hooch blew her whistle.

Bella shot up as fast as she could and leaned forward before sharply diving until she was horizontal. There were gasps and she smirked. The broom was great. It was fast and speedy and she felt she could do anything on the broom. It made her feel exceedingly confident.

"And the Quaffle is taken immediately by Angelina Johnson of Gryffindor—what an excellent Chaser that girl is, and rather attractive, too—"

"JORDAN!"

"Sorry, Professor."

Fred and George's friend, Lee Jordan was doing commentary for the match and was being closely inspected by McGonagall. She was on him like white on rice. Bella snorted at the analogy and shook her head. No she wasn't that close to him.

"And she's really belting along up there, a neat pass to Alicia Spinnet, a good find of Oliver Wood's, last year only a reserve - back to Johnson and - no, the Slytherins have taken the Quaffle, Slytherin Captain Marcus Flint gains the Quaffle and off he goes - Flint flying like an eagle up there - he's going to sc- no, stopped by an excellent move by Gryffindor Keeper Wood and the Gryffindors take the Quaffle -that's Chaser Katie Bell of Gryffindor there, nice dive around Flint, off up the field and - OUCH - that must have hurt, hit in the back of the head by a Bludger - Quaffle taken by the Slytherins - that's Adrian Pucey speeding off toward the goal posts, but he's blocked by a second Bludger-sent his way by Fred or George Weasley, can't tell which - nice play by the Gryffindor Beater, anyway, and Johnson back in possession of the Quaffle, a clear field ahead and off she goes—she's really flying—dodges a speeding Bludger—the goal posts are ahead—come on Angelina. Keeper Bletchley dives—misses—GRYFFINDOR SCORES!"

Loud cheers from the red and gold stands erupted with howls and moans of anger from the Slytherins.

Ron and Hermione sat next to Hagrid, searching through the air for Bella who wasn't around at this point it seemed.

"Bin watchin' from me hut. But it isn't the same as bein' in the crowd. No sign of the Snitch yet, eh?" Hagrid asked as he looked up in the air by the means of a pair of gigantic binoculars.

"Nope. Bella hasn't really been ar..." Ron trailed off as he saw Bella swoop down from the top and intercepted Adrian Pucey who stopped abruptly. It gave Katie Bell the chance to steal the Quaffle and Bella shot the Slytherin Chaser a smirk. Bella ascended again, vertically.

The game continued and suddenly Adrian Pucey had dropped the Quaffle as he was momentarily distracted by a rush of gold. Bella saw it and leaned forward. The Slytherin Seeker, Terrence Higgs had seen it as well.

Bella darted forward when suddenly Marcus Flint spun in front of her and grabbed the end of her broomstick. She stopped abruptly and shrieked when she leaned forward, almost falling off the broom.

"Foul!" the Gryffindors screamed.

Madam Hooch yelled at Flint in anger as Bella grasped her broom again. She gave Gryffindor a free shot but even as Bella looked, the Golden Snitch disappeared. She sighed in annoyance.

"So after that obvious and disgusting bit of cheating—"

"JORDAN!"

"Sorry, Professor. I mean after that open and revolting foul—"

"Jordan, I'm warning you..." McGonagall threatened.

"All right, all right. Flint nearly kills the Gryffindor Seeker, which could happen to anyone, I'm sure, so a penalty to Gryffindor, taken by Spinnet, who puts it away, no trouble, and we continue play, Gryffindor still in possession."

Bella laughed at the commentary and narrowly missed a Bludger. Suddenly, her broom gave a startling lurch. She held on for dear life as her broom started bucking. The broomstick was trying to unseat her and make her a giant red splat on the ground. She held on for dear life as the broom started whipping itself in circles. She screamed but no one seemed to hear her. She was too high above from the rest of the game.

"Slytherin in possession - Flint with the Quaffle - passes Spinnet - passes Bell - hit hard in the face by a Bludger, hope it broke his nose- only joking, Professor - Slytherins score - A no..." Lee said, still commentating. Bella screamed as her broom gave a frightening lurch and she grabbed on even tighter.

"Dunno what Bella thinks she's doing. If I didn't know better..." Hagrid started. Hermione clutched her heart as a pang ran through her. It was fear. Blinding fear that she hadn't been feeling. She looked up at Bella.

"She's lost control of her broom!" Hermione shrieked. Bella was suddenly swung forward and an ear-shattering scream was heard. Bella was holding onto her broom with one hand, the broom still trying to shake her off.

"Did Flint do something to her broom?" Ron asked, shakily.

"Can't nothing interfere with a broomstick except powerful Dark magic. No kid could do that" Hagrid said. Hermione grabbed the binoculars and looked at the teacher's stand. Professor Riddle looked absolutely terrified. He didn't even look like he could move. His left hand was clutching his wand. His right hand had long pale fingers knotted into his robes. He was stick straight and his eyes were crimson again. She looked up and gasped.

"What are you doing?" Ron asked, gray-faced. Hermione resisted the urge to roll her eyes. He was scared for Bella and the Quidditch game. Hermione was actually, for some strange reason, experiencing Bella's fear and terror.

"I knew it! Look at Snape!" Hermione said, pointing. Ron snatched the binoculars and looked through. Snape was looking at Harry with fixed eyes and was muttering nonstop under his breath.

"He's jinxing the broom" Hermione explained.

"What should we do?" Ron asked, quietly. Hermione smirked and withdrew her wand and crossed her arms.

"Leave it to me" was her only response before jumped over the seat, gracefully and ran. Ron watched in surprise as her fluid movement before turning back to keep an eye on Bella who was slipping. Fred and George were trying to pull her onto one of the brooms but every time the broom went only higher.

As everyone watched Bella, Marcus Flint scored five more times with the Quaffle without anyone noticing.

"Marvolo! HELP ME!" Bella shrieked in Parseltongue. Tom clutched his robes even tighter. His skin was pale white by now.

"MARVOLO! HELP ME! HELP ME! HELP ME! HELP ME! HELP ME!" Bella screamed as another finger slipped from the broom. She only held on with four fingers now and her grip continued to slip.

"Marvolo? Who's Marvolo? What's a Marvolo?"

The whispers went through the stands. Tom closed his eyes. He couldn't bare not looking at her anymore and he didn't understand why. He knew Snape was already trying to do the countercurse so he said nothing.

Hermione snuck around beneath the stand right where Snape's robes billowed. She pressed her wand to a stray piece of cloth and smirked.

"Incendio" she whispered. The edge of his robes burst into flames and thirty seconds later there was a yelp. She watched as Bella still struggled to slip back on her broom. Even without it jerking she was slipping. Suddenly, Bella felt the help of familiar magic.

"Beeeella...get back on...get back on" a voice whispered in ear. She looked around but found no one. She shook her head when suddenly her eyes bled crimson and she swung her leg over almost mechanically. Fred and George's eyes widened as they saw her blood eyes. She sped off, determined before stopping in front of the teacher's stand. She looked at Tom and for once their eyes matched in color. The teacher's stared wide-eyed as she looked at Tom, intensely.

"Thank you, Marvolo..." she whispered before speeding upward. Her face was pale and set in stone. She shook her head and her eyes turned green once again. She grit her teeth and pushed her broom to the limit. She spiraled into the air and Ron sighed in relief.

"Neville, you can look now" Ron said. Neville had been sobbing into Hagrid's large coat, thinking that the girl was about to die. Suddenly, Bella stopped and grabbed her throat. Her broom sped towards the ground and she collapsed onto the sandy ground in a heap. She looked like she was about to be sick and Tom watched, carefully. He could feel the other teachers' eyes on him but he didn't give a damn. The only one he cared about was Dumbledore's damned twinkling eyes. He gave a parody of a smile at the thought of tearing the out of its sockets before wiping his face of emotion.

Bella was on all fours and something gold popped out of her mouth. Bella stared in shock before grinning and throwing her hand into the air, the golden object in hand.

"I've got the Snitch!" she shouted, waving it above her head. Marcus Flint landed first and looked like he was about to throttle her. Madam Hooch and Oliver landed next and looked at her in wonder.

"She didn't catch it! She nearly swallowed it!" Flint howled in rage even hours later.

That day Bella had walked up to Tom in the middle of the crowded Great Hall right before she would go to Hagrid's hut. Ron and Hermione stood there, a little ways back and Bella looked at him in wonder.

"They say my eyes turned crimson. I wonder why" Bella said, quietly. Tom tilted his head but said nothing.

"I heard your voice too. In Parseltongue. Sorry for calling you Marvolo. Detention?" Bella asked, almost hopeful. Tom smirked at this and nodded but uncharacteristically, his eyes were soft.

"Miss Potter, you're eyes turned crimson for a reason. I will tell you when you are older" Tom said, quietly. She took this as an answer and nodded before walking away, quickly.

But Tom couldn't tell her. He would never tell her.

Because she would dead by the end of the year.

And for some reason, that made his stomach turn.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 9th of November 1991

3:00 PM

Bella sat with Hermione and Ron as Hagrid made the three strong tea to battle the bitter cold that was just beyond the walls of the little hut.

"It was Snape! Hermione and I saw him. He was cursing your broomstick. Hermione took him out and saved you though," Ron said, proudly as if it were all his idea. Bella shook her head and cleared her throat.

"Rubbish! Why would Snape do somethin' like that?" asked Hagrid as he placed the tea in front of the kids.

"I don't know but Hermione didn't save me. She stopped the broom from bucking. I couldn't get back on. I was about let myself drop. But then...Marvolo saved me" Bella said, quietly. Hermione's eyes widened.

"Who is Marvolo? I heard you screaming for him when you were falling. Some people heard you too but they thought it was just you screaming a spell or something of the sort. It's a name, isn't it?" Hermione asked. Bella nodded. Hagrid seemed to have an idea of who it was.

"Yes it is. Professor Riddle's middle name is Marvolo. Salazar calls him that all the time and I call him that to piss him off. I don't know why I screamed his name...there was something...my eyes turned crimson and it felt like someone was making me get up when I couldn't. Riddle's eyes turn crimson when he's in emotional distress" Bella commented. Hagrid looked at her in shock.

"How would ye' know tha'?" Hagrid asked. Bella blinked and shook her head.

"Remember that troll that we had a run in with? It almost killed me and he was so...angry. His eyes were red then. But my eyes turned red apparently. So Snape cursed me?" Bella said, wishing to move the topic from her. Hermione and Ron nodded and Hagrid shook his head.

"Snape wouldn't do somethin' like that. Dumbledore trusts him" Hagrid said, strongly. The trio exchanged looks. They decided on the truth.

"I found out something about him. He tried to get past the three-headed dog on Halloween. It bit him. We think he was trying to steal whatever it's guarding. Well Hermione doesn't think that—" Bella trailed off as Hagrid spilled his tea.

"How do you know about Fluffy?" he asked, in shock.

"Fluffy?"

"Yeah. He's mine...bought him of a Greek chappie I met in the pub las' year. I lent him to Dumbledore to guard the..."

"Yes? To guard what?" Bella asked, forcefully.

"Now don't ask me anymore. That's top secret" Hagrid said, gruffly.

"But Snape's trying to steal it!" Ron snapped.

"Rubbish. Snape's a Hogwarts teacher. He'd do nothin' of the sort" Hagrid repeated. Hermione slammed her hand down and Bella felt another nagging tug on her mind. Hermione's eyes were dark in anger.

"So why did he try to kill Bella? Even I find something wrong that! And in broad daylight! He's a fool. A desperate fool" Hermione shrieked. Hagrid and Ron cringed. Bella sat still. It sounded as if Hermione wanted to show Snape how it was done.

Hermione looked absolutely insane. Her nose was flared and her eyes darker than obsidian. She straightened and the chocolate brown returned and she sat back down, blushing.

"Sorry...I just lost my temper" Hermione said, quietly.

"Snape wouldn't do somethin' like that!" Hagrid snapped. Hermione snorted.

"I know a jinx when I see one, oa—Hagrid. I've read all about them. You've got to keep eye contact and he hadn't blinked once" Hermione said, trying again by using her knowledge instead of losing her temper.

"I'm tellin' yeh, yer wrong!" said Hagrid hotly.

"I don' know why Bella's broom acted like that, but Snape wouldn' try an' kill a student! Now, listen to me, all three of yeh. Yer meddlin' in things that don' concern yeh. It's dangerous. You forget that dog, an' you forget what it's guardin', that's between Professor Dumbledore an' Nicolas Flamel" Hagrid finished.

"So...there's someone named Nicholas Flamel involved, eh?" Bella smirked. He was so easy to fool it seemed.

"I shouldn't have told you that..." Hagrid whispered, furious with himself. Bella shrugged and crossed her arms.

"But...you did. And I'm not letting that one go."

...

A/N: As you should've figured out by now, Tom is evil and on Grindelwald's side. And he's not known to be merciful, I know. But he's forgiven Bella so easy. He forgave her for a reason. Why don't you try to figure it out and tell me what you think.

AND...we're nearing the end of Book 1. The last chapter of the Philosopher's Stone will be the chapter after the next and then a nice Interlude over the summer. And then CHAMBER OF SECRETS!

Next Chapter: Desire, mirrors, Nicholas Flamel, and the Forbidden Forest.

Chapter VII

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 21st of December 1991

11:00 AM

Bella sighed as she listened to Malfoy brag as everyone packed away their Potions ingredients. He was talking about how amazing his Manor would look after the house elves were done cleaning it up.

"I do feel so sorry for all those people who have to stay at Hogwarts for Christmas because there isn't enough room in the house or their blood traitor Uncle doesn't even want them. Or even worse...their parents don't want them because their full of dirty blood" Malfoy had said. All of the Slytherins laughed and Bella frowned. She knew that he was directing the comments at them. Hermione didn't seem concerned at all. Ron looked furious. His ears and neck were red but he was doing a good job of staying put.

"Are you okay?" Hermione asked, quietly. Bella had been looking down, doing nothing for the past minutes. Bella laughed, awkwardly.

"I'm fine. Er...uh...Merlin! I sound like an incoherent idiot. Kind of like how Malfoy sounds all the time" Bella said, loudly as they exited. She passed the sputtering Malfoy, her knapsack thrown over her shoulder.

"Close your mouth, Malfoy. You'll catch some flies that way" Bella said before leaving the classroom. Hermione and Ron were laughing after her as they exited. As they went up the stairs to the Great Hall, ready for lunch they saw that a gigantic fir tree blocked their way. Two enormous feet peeking out from underneath revealed that it was Hagrid.

"Hi Hagrid! Want any help?" Ron asked, his face in the branches as he looked for away to see Hagrid through the thickness of the branches.

"Nah, I'm all right. Thanks, Ron" the response came. It was slightly muffled and it told them that Hagrid's face was also in the branches.

"Would you mind moving out of the way? Trying to earn extra money, Weasley? Hoping to be gamekeeper yourself when you leave Hogwarts I bet. That hut of Hagrid's must be a palace compared to what you're family's used to" drawled a cold voice. Bella spun around at the voice and saw a smirking Malfoy with his two bodyguards. Ron dived at Malfoy just as Snape came up the stairs.

"WEASLEY!"

Ron let go of the front of Malfoy's robes, quickly and took a step back.

"He was provoked, Professor Snape. Malfoy was insultin' his family" Hagrid defended. Snape suddenly looked pained that there had been an adult witness to everything. He couldn't disregard what he had said.

"Be that as it may, Hagrid, fighting is against Hogwarts rules. Five points from Gryffindor, Weasley, and be grateful that it isn't more. Move along all of you" Snape said, smoothly. He walked past them and Malfoy and his goons followed by pushing past the giant tree, scattering needles everywhere.

"I'll get him...one of these days I will get him" Ron grinded out. Bella was staring intensely at Snape's back.

"I hate them...I hate them so much. Malfoy and Snape" Bella said with horrible conviction. They followed Hagrid into the Great Hall to see McGonagall and Flitwick decorating. Holly and mistletoe hung on the walls and no less than twelve trees were now present.

"How many day you got until yer holidays?" Hagrid asked. Hermione tilted her head and cleared her throat.

"One. I decided to stay. And that reminds me. Bella, Ron, we have to go to the library" Hermione reminded them. Bella and Ron nodded, showing that they remembered. She nagged them about it everyday.

"What for? Just before the holidays?" asked Hagrid, confused. Bella gave him a bright smile.

"Oh, we're not working on anything like that. Ever since you mentioned Nicholas Flamel we've been trying to find out who he is. My Uncle Sirius told me he was an alchemist but that's all we've found. He doesn't even know much about him so it's up to us. He's looking for us on the outside. We told him it was for History of Magic" Bella grinned. Hagrid stared at her in shock.

"You what?" he demanded. Bella's grin slipped off and formed a frown.

"We told him it was for History of Magic...that's not a problem is it?" she asked. Hagrid shook his head and sighed.

"Not that! Listen here, I've told yeh—drop it. It's nothin' to you what that dog's guardin'."

"We just want to know who Nicholas Flamel is, that's all" Hermione soothed. The three went to the library but unfortunately...nothing could be found.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 25th of December 1991

7:00 AM

Bella woke up early in the morning to see presents at the foot of her bed. She scrambled over to Hermione's bed and shook the girl awake. The dark eyed girl woke up and yawned. She smiled at the mounds of presents.

"Merry Christmas" Hermione said. Bella nodded and hugged Hermione tightly and kissed her cheek. She had come to view the girl like a sister.

"Happy Yuletide" Bella said, quietly. Hermione looked at the girl strangely and tilted her head in confusion.

"Do you not celebrate Christmas? I never asked if they had different customs...I just assumed everyone celebrated Christmas" Hermione said. She looked slightly annoyed that she hadn't known. Bella couldn't help but laugh.

"Yule is something that Dark families used to celebrate. It's Christmas but we have different customs. The Blacks are family with Dark magic affinity. I was raised as a pureblood. So we celebrate Yule. But some families, like the Malfoys have lost their way and don't celebrate Yule" Bella explained. Hermione nodded and they exchanged looks before looking at the presents.

"Should we open presents or get dressed first?" Bella asked. Hermione gave the presents a sly look.

"Presents..." she said. They nodded and began to rip open presents. Hermione got a Weasley sweater from Mrs. Weasley. It was purple and she smiled at it. It was obvious Ron had written to his parents about her. From Bella she opened two presents. One was a massive tome about pureblood customs and a book on alchemy, which she couldn't find anywhere Hogwarts' extensive library. The other was black and navy Yule robes. From Ron she got a box of chocolate frogs.

"This book looks so interesting, Bella. Thanks!" Hermione said, excitedly. Bella laughed and shook her head.

She went to turn to her presents and ripped them open. She got an emerald Weasley sweater, a locket from Sirius with rubies on it. The locket was silver and inside was a picture of Sirius, Remus, her parents and her as baby. On the other side it had an inscription.

'A picture of the love of your life...you better not have on until you 45'.

"Your uncle is very protective. Kind of like my dad" Hermione commented when Bella showed her. Bella nodded.

"He is. He's like a father to me. He always looks out for me. Hey, Hermione, maybe you can meet him this summer. Fancy meeting up at my house? We have a library" Bella asked. Hermione nodded, ecstatically.

"Of course!" was her immediate answer. Bella turned back to her presents and found four more. One was from Hagrid. It was roughly cut wooden flute that sound like an owl when blow into. It was obvious that Hagrid had whittled it himself. That just made Bella's smile brighter.

"You have two more left" Hermione pointed out. Bella picked up the more elegant looking parcel. It had her name on it in a familiar elegant cursive. She opened it more delicately than the others and there was a letter sitting on top.

Bella looked at the gift with wide eyes. It was crimson robes that were beautifully and elegantly cut. They were obviously for Yule. Bella knew that no matter what, even if everyone wasn't wearing them, she would wear her Yule robes just like her uncle had in school. But...how had he known?

"Those are beautiful. Do you know who gave it to you?" Hermione asked. Bella bit her lip and considered telling the truth.

Instead she shook her head.

"Oh...oh well. Let's get ready for breakfast" Hermione suggested. She knew Bella wasn't telling the truth but didn't object and said nothing. Bella sighed in relief before realizing she had one more gift left.

"I have one more gift..." Bella said. Hermione stopped and watched as Bella ripped it open. Some fluid and silvery grey fell on the ground. Bella and Hermione gasped as they realized what it was.

"It's an invisibility cloak! They're really rare!" Hermione gasped. Bella nodded and the two slipped into the bathroom to look in the mirror. Bella threw it over her shoulders and her lower body disappeared and she gaped.

"There was a note. Could you get it?" Bella asked. Hermione nodded and came back 15 seconds later with the note.

Written in loopy and narrow handwriting that Bella didn't recognize was:

Your father left this in my possession before he died. It is time it was returned to you. Use it well.

A Very Merry Christmas To You

"Why did they have it?" Bella asked. Hermione could give her no answer.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 25th of December 1991

8:15 AM

Bella's crimson robes fell over her gracefully and she smiled. It was such a dark crimson, no one would be able to make any connection between the color and who had given it to her. Her black hair was brushed for once and wasn't in a ponytail. It fell down her back in an elegant plait like she always had it for Yule. Hermione's hair was in a braid and her navy and black robes looked severe. She looked severe.

"Merry Christmas...why are you guys all dressed up?" Ron asked when he really looked at them as they finally came down to the common room. Bella smiled.

"I don't celebrate Christmas. I celebrate Yule. Happy Yuletide" Bella clarified again. Ron frowned and crossed his arms.

"But...Slytherins celebrate Yule" Ron had objected. The trio exited as Bella explained to him that all Dark families celebrated Yule and how, though her Uncle Sirius was Neutral, he came from a Dark family with traditions that they followed. Ron didn't seem to understand but didn't object.

Bella's eyes met Tom's and lips were curled into the ever present smirk. She nodded at him in thanks and he inclined his head before turning back to his food. Nagini was draped over his shoulders. None of the students look alarmed. She sat down next to George and Fred.

"Nagini's here. Why isn't anyone freaking out like they did last time?" asked Bella in confusion. Hermione seemed to be worried about the same thing. Fred gave her a reassuring smile.

"Because his snake always comes on Christmas. Everyone's just scared of her. It's okay if you're scared" Fred said, giving her a spooky look. Bella snorted and shook her head. She crooked her

finger at the snake and the python hissed in amusement. She dropped from her master's shoulders before slithering across the floor. There were squeaks but no one screamed.

"I'm not afraid of my darling Nagini" Bella murmured. She kissed the massive snake on the nose as she draped herself over the girl's shoulders. Nagini licked her nose and Bella laughed. Fred and George were staring at her in shock.

"Professor Riddle let's you touch his snake? We tried to prank him with her but he went ballistic. His eyes went crimson...like yours did during the Quidditch match" George said, his voice lowering when they talked about the Quidditch match. Bella shrugged. It wasn't much with the gigantic snake on her shoulders.

"Nagini is a sweetheart" Bella's answer was.

She continued to stroke the snake's head as she ate and Ron looked at her strangely as if he were debating in saying something. He seemed about to say something when Bella felt a familiar presence behind her.

"You have something to say to me, Miss Potter" a voice whispered. She looked up to see Tom. She turned in her seat and looked at him. She really looked at him and she felt a blush rise in her cheeks as she found herself agreeing with what Lavender had told her.

That Tom Marvolo Riddle, her professor, her magical guardian, the bane of her existence was hot.

She laughed at herself for her embarrassment.

Tom was wearing Yule robes of dark emerald green and his eyes were bleeding crimson around the edges.

"Er...uh...um...uh" she said. Tom sighed and shook his head as he stroked Nagini's head. Nagini hissed in pleasure but didn't move from Bella's shoulders.

"What did I say about sounding like an incoherent moron?" Tom asked, almost patiently.

"Not to. Happy Yuletide...Marvolo" Bella taunted. Tom rolled his eyes and Bella pouted that she hadn't been able to make him threaten her or even give her a detention. It wasn't fun if she couldn't make him annoyed anymore.

"That will suffice. Nagini, let us find you some breakfast. Happy Yuletide, brat" Tom retorted as Nagini slithered up to her master. Bella sneered at him and he gave her a bored look.

"Goodbye, Marvolo" she spat. He smirked at her smacked her in the back of the head, her head going forward. Fred and George snickered as she looked at him in shock.

"Goodbye, brat. And detention" he smirked at her as she stared after him in horror and disdain. As soon as someone noticed Nagini was gone, the volume escalated. Hermione sighed.

"You really shouldn't bait him like that" Hermione chastised her. Bella shrugged, stabbing her ham rather viciously.

"Stupid son of a...mother fu..." she said, her voice varying in volume as she muttered to herself about how unfair he was.

"How did he get away with smacking you?" asked Fred, curiously. Bella stabbed at her plate one more time, cracking it before turning to Fred as it mended itself.

"He's my magical guardian. Don't ask why or how because today is not the day to be asking me questions. I hope he falls into a ditch" she snapped to herself before downing her scalding hot tea in one go.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 25th of December 1991

11:15 PM

It had been one of the best Yule days ever for Bella she noted as she slipped out of her robes. She threw on simple charcoal trousers and a button down white shirt. She sat on her bed and felt the cloak. It was slippery underneath her fingers

It had been her father's. The father she had never known. As she touched it she felt comfort in knowing that she had one of her father's possessions. However, she wanted something of her mother's. She had always felt a connection with the woman who had died for her.

"I need to use it" whispered Bella. She got up and slung the cloak around her. The silvery cloth fell over her and she could see it before it disappeared and she along with it. She slid the cloak over her head.

She heard Hermione murmur in her sleep but didn't say anything. She wanted to use this on her first time, alone. By herself. She slipped down the stairs, her lace up boots on securely. The portrait swung open and the Fat Lady looked around, anxiously.

"Who's there?" she had asked.

Bella hadn't answered. She continued walking, thinking about where she should go. She remembered the library and how she had been looking for books. Hermione, Ron and her had agreed that they probably wouldn't find Nicholas Flamel anywhere. Hermione had claimed that previously she had read something but couldn't remember where so they continued searching. The only place left was the Restricted Section.

Bella decided to go there and she walked to it quickly. The library was eerily dark and Bella lit a lamp. She stepped over the rope separating the Restricted Section from the rest of the library.

She lifted the lamp, trying to read some of the titles. She couldn't read many of them. The lettering on the spines were peeling off though she could read the Elvish books and she smiled. She picked up a book in Old English from the looks of it and opened it.

A piercing, bloodcurdling book emerged from it. Bella shut it in horror but the scream went on and on. She heard footsteps and she threw the lamp with as much strength as possible across the Restricted Section to another area. The glass shattered and the footsteps went in the opposite direction. She put the book back and ran. She stumbled over a chair and the noise was heard. She righted herself and Filch was seeing right through her.

"You asked me to come directly to you, Professor, if anyone was wandering around at night and somebody's been in the Restricted Section" Filch said. Standing next to him was a sour faced Snape and a chill Tom Riddle. He was looking dead into Bella's eyes and she flinched.

He could see her.

He could see her.

His eyes gestured to the side of him. She scrambled under his arm and ran down an unfamiliar hallway. She squeezed through a door on the left of it and stopped in shock. A large and beautiful mirror stood in the room.

Along the top were words:

Erised stra ehru oyt ube cafru oyt on wohsi

She approached it and pressed her hand to it. Behind her in the mirror stood a man with untamable black hair and hazel eyes. He had round glasses and was smiling down at Bella. And next to him was a woman.

She was beautiful with long red hair and vibrant green eyes that matched Bella's perfectly. She was looking at Bella with a soft smile. Bella reached out to touch her but her soft fingers met the glass.

Suddenly, the mirror blacked out and suddenly showed Tom standing behind Bella. The woman in the mirror was the one she always saw in her dreams. The one that rode on the unicorn.

The woman was kissing Tom, fiercely. Her leg was hooked around his waist and they pulled close together. Her black hair was unruly and she was pale. They were in their own little world and the woman pulled away and turned to look.

She caught shocking Avada Kedavra green before the mirror fogged and revealed Bella's parents once again. This time her mother was crying but smiling at the same time.

"Mommy? Daddy?" Bella asked in a small voice. She could almost remember saying those words. They looked at her and Lily, her

mother nodded fiercely. She pressed against the glass, and Bella pushed back.

She felt terrible sadness rip through her as she felt the coolness of glass separating her from the mirror. Suddenly, standing next to her parents and leaning against the edge of the mirror was Tom Riddle. He was smiling, not smirking, at her with charcoal eyes. His wand was in hand and leaning against the other side of the wall was the crazy woman with the stick straight hair. The blonde man that had ridden on the thestral stood behind his parents with two redheads whose features she couldn't make out.

The Italian man with tanned skin and dark hair was standing with the woman with stick straight hair and smiling at her. Everyone was smiling at her and Lily looked down at her daughter.

"This will be your new family..."

The words shocked Bella before the mirror went blank and showed only her. She fell to her knees. She couldn't decide between what she was feeling. She was half joy and half sadness.

She stood there looking at her reflection, touching the place where her mother's hand had been and she bit her lip and looked away, her eyes dark with tears. She wandered off to bed, in a blank state. She slipped into bed and slept quietly.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 26th of December 1991

11:45 PM

Hermione and Ron were with her this time and they were standing in front of the massive mirror. Bella could see what her mother had called her new family. Bella gestured at the mirror.

"Can you see them? The people" Bella asked. Ron was staring with a wide grin on his face.

"No...I'm alone. I'm different. I'm older. And I'm head boy!" Ron said, ecstatically. Hermione was shaking her head, looking weird. Bella crossed her arms and stared as Hermione cleared her throat.

"So am I...I see me as head girl and valedictorian, telling my speech at graduation" Hermione lied. Bella could tell. Ron was still grinning. He didn't notice that his best friends were not.

"I'm wearing the badge, like Bill used to. And I'm holding the house cup and Quidditch cup. I'm Quidditch captain, too! Do you think this can tell the future?" asked Ron. Bella shook her head and Ron looked crest-fallen.

"I saw my parents. They're dead" Bella said, quietly. She didn't tell him of the other images she had seen. Like the woman who now that she thought about it looked only 16 or 17, snogging Tom.

When the three returned to their rooms Hermione had pulled Bella to the side and they went to where their sanctuary was. The bathroom just on the side of their dorm room.

"What did you really see?" Bella asked. Hermione blushed and looked down. She looked away.

"I saw me and this man...he was very handsome. He was Italian. I just know it. He was tan with dark hair. And I saw a man with pale blonde hair and silvery eyes. He looked like a relative of Malfoy. I saw a tall dark-haired woman. And I saw Professor Riddle who was kissing the dark-haired woman and an old man. The one face I didn't see was the dark-haired woman's but I don't know why. When she turned the mirror turned back to normal for me. I don't know why" Hermione said, quietly. Bella nodded and touched Hermione on the shoulder and smiled.

She didn't want to tell Hermione about her dreams and what she had also saw in the mirror so she said nothing and went to her bed to sleep.

That night she dreamed once again of the battlefield and noticed that she didn't see her or Hermione on either side of the battlefield.

And her scar throbbed.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 27th of December 1991

11:32 PM

The next night, Bella went alone. She looked at the mirror and Tom was standing in front of her with the brown haired woman. They were beckoning her closer and the brown haired crazy woman didn't look so crazy to her now. She looked normal. She looked happy and beautiful.

Bella sank down to her knees just as Tom had kneeled on one knee and touched the glass on the other side. She placed her hand over where his hand should be and closed her eyes. There was nothing keeping her from being here with her new family as her mother had said.

She wanted them. She wanted them so bad. She would do anything to get them.

"Back so soon, Bella?"

Bella spun around and looked to see Albus Dumbledore sitting on one of the desks near the wall.

"Er...I didn't see you sir" Bella answered, carefully. She was judging the distance between her and the door but she decided that it was futile to run. He had already seen her.

"Strange how nearsighted being invisible can make you" said Dumbledore with a smile on his face. This smile made Bella feel absolutely safe and she sat back and leaned against the mirror. She looked up to see Tom still smiling at her.

"So, you like hundreds before you, have discovered the delights of the Mirror of Erised" Dumbledore commented.

"I didn't know that was the name, sir."

"I expect you've realized by now what it does?" Dumbledore asked. Bella tilted her head and looked up at her family and how they were still smiling at her.

"Er...yes. I see my family. Not my parents but others...some that I haven't even met" Bella commented. Dumbledore's eyes widened

but he didn't comment on it and Bella was sure that it was okay that she had told him.

"And it showed your friend Ron himself as head boy."

"How did you know, sir?" Bella asked in complete surprise. Had the three of them walked past him yesterday as well.

"I don't need a cloak to become invisible. Now can you think what the Mirror of Erised show us?" Dumbledore asked, gently. Bella frowned and shook her head as she thought about. No she couldn't understand.

"Let me explain. The happiest man on earth would be able to use the Mirror of Erised like a normal mirror and see himself as he is."

"It shows us...what we want...what we desperately need...what we desire" Bella whispered as she pressed her forehead to mirror-Tom's should have been. He was looking at her with the soft eyes that bled crimson at the edges and she pulled away, almost painfully. Dumbledore seemed to be surprised that she knew.

"Yes. It shows us nothing more or less than the deepest, most desperate desire of our hearts. You, desperately want this family that you've never met nor know how to obtain them. Ronald Weasley, who has always been overshadowed by his brothers, sees himself standing alone, the best of all of them. However, this mirror will give us neither knowledge or truth. Men have wasted away before it, entranced by what they have seen, or been driven mad, not knowing if what it shows is real or even possible" Dumbledore said, quietly. Bella slumped against the mirror again, wanting to be closer to those people in the mirror.

The blonde man in the mirror was making funny faces at her now and she giggled. He seemed at first, much too aristocratic to make such faces. The Italian man laughed as well and the brunette was giggling, insanely.

"The Mirror will be moved to a new home tomorrow, Bella, and I ask you not to go looking for it again. If you ever do run across it, you will now be prepared. It does not do to dwell on dreams and forget to live, remember that. Now, why don't you put that admirable cloak back on and get off to bed?" said Dumbledore, quietly. Bella looked

at him frantically before nodding and picking up her cloak. She turned to Dumbledore.

"Sir, what do you see in the mirror?" she asked. Dumbledore smiled but that grief and sorrow she had seen in his eyes only a handful of times before resurfaced in his deep blue eyes.

"I, I see a pair of socks."

"You're lying, Professor, but I suppose it was a personal question" Bella said before turning to the mirror. She leaned her forehead against the mirror and placed her hands on them. The Italian man leaned against the glass and winked at her. The brunette was crying, knowing it was last time to see her. She was smiling at Bella though, like her mother had done. The blonde gave her a sad smile.

The mirror Tom was on her level and his larger hands were over where hers were. Their foreheads were separated by glass and she looked him in the eyes.

"I'm going to get you. You're going to be mine. I promise. Melindë ilya" Bella whispered.

I love you all.

And she knew it was true even if she had never met them. She had a bond with them that wasn't established now but it would be.

She would make sure of it.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 5th of January 1992

9:15 PM

Bella was watching Hermione and Ron play chess after she had finished telling them the absolutely terrible news of Snape refereeing the next match. They had given her a bunch of ludicrous ideas such as faking a broken leg (which had merit until she remembered diagnosis spells) to an actual broken leg which she wasn't doing. She had enough emotional pain.

Every night the new family her mother told her about haunted her dreams. It was much better than her old dreams about the battlefield but in other ways were much worse. Battle was coming. She could feel it. She knew that the Ministry was corrupt and one day they would come to bring anarchy and then establish a new Order.

Well that was the Dark fairytales said but she never put much thought behind that.

She contemplated that when Neville toppled into the common room. Bella gaped and Hermione and her stood up to help the poor boy up. His legs were in the Leg-Locker curse and everyone was laughing loudly.

Neville turned pink and looked down. Hermione sent everyone a dark glare and they sobered up, with the stray giggle falling from one of the older and less intimidated students.

"What happened?" Hermione asked, worriedly.

"Malfoy. I met him outside the library. He said he had been looking for someone to practice on" Neville said, shakily. Bella gritted her teeth and she snarled under her breath.

"I'll murder the little git..." Bella hissed under her breath.

"Go to Professor McGonagall! Report him!" Hermione said, angrily. Neville shook his head and flushed more.

"I don't want more trouble" he muttered.

"You've got to stand up to him, Nev! He's used to walking all over people but that's no reason to lie down in front of him and make it easier!" Ron protested.

Hermione took out a chocolate frog she had gotten from Ron and gave it to Neville who smiled.

"You're worth twelve of Malfoy. The Sorting Hat chose you for Gryffindor, didn't it? You have the courage to stand up to him. And Malfoy's a Slytherin. A coward. Not all of them are cowards but he got that trait. He's all bark, no bite. Next time he messes with you tell him you know the Mistress of Snakes. He'll get it and back off. I

promise" Bella said, sincerely. Neville nodded and opened the candy. He ate it before giving the card to Ron.

"Thanks, Bella...I think I'll go to bed...here's the card, Ron. You collect them right?" Neville asked. Ron nodded and accepted the card. Neville went to the dorm and Ron sighed.

"Dumbledore, again. Want it, Bella?" Ron asked. Bella shrugged and looked it over before gasping in shock.

"I've found him! I've found Flamel! Listen to this: 'Dumbledore is particularly famous for his long going fight against the dark wizard Grindelwald, who fell to Bella Potter in 1981, for the discovery of the twelve uses of dragon's blood, and his work on alchemy with his partner, Nicolas Flamel!'" Bella said, excitedly. Hermione jumped up and ran up the stairs before coming down with the book Bella had bought her.

"I can't believe I never thought to look in here! This is the book Bella had bought me for Christ...Yule" Hermione said, answering Ron's unspoken question. She flipped open the heavy book and she flipped through the pages. Bella and Ron looked over her shoulder before she grinned.

"I knew it! I knew it!" she said, happily.

"What did you know this time?" Ron asked, grumpily. Hermione leaned forward.

"Nicholas Flamel is the only known maker of the Philosopher's Stone" she said, dramatically. Bella had gaped at this. Her uncle had told her of these things. The important things in history...like the ability to be potentially immortal!

"The what?" Ron asked.

"Oh honestly! Don't you read? Here read this, if you can...I swear it's like you're completely incapable of doing so" Hermione snapped. Ron read before pulling away and gaping.

"See? The dog must be guarding Flamel's Philosopher's Stone! I bet he asked Dumbledore to keep it safe for him because they're friends!" Hermione said, excitedly. Ron's eyes widened.

"A stone that makes gold and stops you from ever dying! No wonder Snape wants it. Anyone would want it!" Bella gasped. Ron nodded in agreement before snorting. They looked at him in surprise.

"And no wonder we could find Flamel in the study of Recent Developments in Wizardry. At six hundred and sixty-five, he's passed ancient and is bordering prehistoric" Ron snorted. Hermione threw him a scathing look before announcing that she was going to think about this more before abandoning the chess match. As soon as she left Ron grinned.

She had lost him. Again!

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 22nd of February 1992

10:56 AM

Bella was in her Quidditch robes again and she sighed as she laced up her boots. She tried not to dwell on the fact that Snape had suddenly desired to referee this match. He had been a right ass in all her classes and the only relief for her was that she always had DADA right after where Tom would be there to banter with and get detentions from.

Most of the other students thought that they hated each other but that wasn't the case. He was Bella's favorite teacher and she knew she was his favorite student. And he didn't want to show favoritism so he was hard on her.

She walked outside of the girl's side of the tent when Oliver had brought her to the side a little.

"Don't want to pressure you, Bella, but if we ever need an early catch of the Snitch that'd be now. So could you catch it before Snape begins to favor Hufflepuff too much?" asked Wood. Bella smirked and nodded.

"I can do that..." she said, quietly. Fred stuck his head out of the tent and gasped.

"The whole school's out there! Blimey...even Dumbledore's come to watch" Fred said. Bella stuck her head out and could see the silver beard miles away.

Her stomach did a somersault. She knew she would be safe even though Ron and Hermione didn't believe so. Tom would've helped her just like he had last time. But now that Dumbledore was here she recalled their one-on-one meeting at the mirror.

He had known what she had said to the mirror. She already knew that. But what surprised her was that he hadn't questioned her on how she knew it.

She took off flying, not even paying attention to the game. She caught flashes of how Snape awarded Hufflepuff a penalty because George had hit a Bludger at him. Bella turned to look at the Gryffindor stand to see Ron and Hermione being bullied by Malfoy. Bella's eyes narrowed.

"Not this time..." she whispered. She went as fast as she could and flew right over his head. Malfoy let out a shriek and everyone laughed loudly.

"Sorry about that Malfoy!" she shouted, gleefully as she swooped back up and around to look for the Snitch.

She had caught it in the next few minutes after spotting the Snitch flying over Snape's head. She had made a spectacular dive and pulled upright right over him and he had looked at her in shock. She smirked down at him before throwing her hand in the air, announcing that the game was over. She laughed and jumped off her broom.

Snape looked tight-lipped and pale with anger. A hand rested on her shoulder and she looked up, thinking that she was about to see Tom. It was Dumbledore.

And it surprised her so much that she jerked away and bumped into a familiar person. She leaned against Tom in shock and she felt his hand on the top of her head. Her head flew forward as he smacked her and she gaped at him.

"That was for making such a moronic move. Could've killed yourself..." Tom muttered. Bella sneered at him.

"Did I scare you? So sorry that I was trying to win, Marvolo" Bella spat. Tom smirked at her but his eyes told her what he was thinking.

He had been scared for her. And she didn't know why.

That scared her.

"Detention, brat. I will not take your cheek" Tom remarked. Dumbledore looked highly amused with the interaction if a little weirded out about it.

"Well done, Bella. Nice to see that you haven't been brooding about the mirror...been keeping busy...excellent" Dumbledore said, quietly. Bella nodded trying to look innocent.

On the contrary...she had been brooding about the mirror.

Because she desperately desired what it held.

Forbidden Forest, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 22nd of February 1991

6:30 PM

Bella was crouched in a towering beech tree with her broom in hand. She looked down at the little shadowy clearing. Snape was down there with Quirrell. But Quirrell seemed different. He stood straighter.

"D-d-don't know why you wanted t-to m-meet me here of a-a-all p-pl-places" stammered Quirrell. Even Bella could tell it was forced.

"Oh I thought we'd keep this private. Students aren't supposed to know of the Philosopher's Stone" Snape said, icily.

Bella's eyes widened and she leaned down, as silently as she could to hear what Quirrell responded with. She could hear nothing from her height and she cursed internally for opting to be in such a high spot.

"Have you found out how to get past the Cerberus yet?"

"I-I d-don't understand..."

"You don't want me as your enemy, Quirrell. Answer the question" Snape snapped. Quirrell gave a pitiful excuse for a cower.

"I d-don't k-know w-what y-you m-me-mean..."

"You know perfectly well what I mean!" Snape hissed, his wand out. Bella covered her mouth to muffle the gasp that escaped.

Quirrell kept his mouth shut and shook his head. Snape looked at him in disgust and sneer at him in such a way that it made Bella shiver.

"Very well," Snape spat. "We'll have another little chat soon, when you've had time to think things over and decided where your loyalties lie."

He walked away rather quickly and Bella mounted her broom and took off flying once again to go tell Hermione and Ron what she had heard.

But she couldn't help the nagging feeling that something was off with Professor Quirrell. And that off could be her downfall.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 10th of May 1992

1:00 AM

Bella, Ron, and Hermione crept back to the Gryffindor Tower as quietly as possible. They had just delivered Norbert the Norwegian Ridgeback to Charlie, Ron's brother. Bella held the invisibility cloak in her hand. It was late and they were dead tired. Bella contemplated on what had happened in the past weeks.

Hagrid had gotten a dragon that he knew he couldn't keep and kept it until it had hatched, which Bella thought was the most idiotic thing anyone could do when they knew they couldn't keep it.

And then Charlie, Ron's brother had arranged for them to ship it midnight of all times. She didn't know what was wrong with noon at the edge of the Forbidden Forest. It was still 12! She was exhausted and irritable and she knew something was going to go wrong. She could feel it in the pit of her stomach.

And to make matter worst, Hermione had been nagging her about studying for the past weeks as she talked about how exams were coming up. So she had to study all the time that she wasn't doing homework or worrying about the Merlin be damned Philosopher's Stone!

"Well, well, well, we are in trouble."

Bella watched in horror as Filch seemed to Apparate right in front of them. Bella groaned as Filch led them to McGonagall's office.

Things couldn't get much worse.

Bella created alibis, cover up stories, and excuses in her mind but they all seemed too far fetched for the particular situation she was in. To her surprise Hermione was shaking in terror. She seemed to be in deep thought as they walked and Bella could tell that she was developing either an escape route or an excuse. And with the look on her face, it was currently, not adequate for the situation.

"I would never have believed it any of you. Mr. Filch says you were in the astronomy tower. It is one o' clock in the morning. Explain yourselves. Immediately!" McGonagall said in cold fury. Malfoy was smirking at them from beside her.

"I...we...Professor, we have no excuse" Bella said, quietly. Ron and Hermione looked at her in shock. McGonagall stared at Bella in shock and raised an eyebrow. She hadn't expected her to respond.

"You see...we've never really explored the castle and I suggested that we go out without any people around. It was all my fault. I made them come with me" Bella continued. McGonagall's nose flared, as the other two said nothing in their astonishment.

"That may be Miss Potter but I will not allow this to pass unpunished. You, Miss Granger, I thought you had more sense! As for you, Miss Potter, I thought Professor Riddle would've taught you something in

all those detentions you spend there writing lines and such. All three of you will attend detention and...fifty points from Gryffindor...each" McGonagall decided. They gaped but Hermione and Bella had the sense to close their mouths.

"Professor, you can't—" Ron protested.

"Don't tell me what I can and can't do Mr. Weasley. Now get back to bed, all of you. I've never been more ashamed of Gryffindor students" were McGonagall's final words. She turned to Malfoy who had been smirking until this point.

"As for you, Mr. Malfoy, wipe that smirk off your face. Fifty points from Slytherin and you will serve detention with them. You are dismissed" she said, sharply before turning on their heel.

And the next morning Bella Potter was the most hated kid in the school for losing one hundred and fifty points for her house in one go.

Only Hermione, Ron, and surprisingly and less openly, Tom Riddle stood by her.

Forbidden Forest, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Tuesday the 26th of May 1992

11:00 PM

"The forest? We can't go in there at night! There's all sorts of things in there...werewolves, I've heard!" Malfoy said in horror as they stood at the edge of said forest with Filch and Hagrid.

"That's your problem, isn't it? Should've thought of them werewolves before you got in trouble, shouldn't you?" Filch leered at the Malfoy heir. He still looked scared and Belle sneered at him.

"Be a man, Malfoy" she hissed at him before turning back to Hagrid as Filch lumbered away. Malfoy's demeanor changed as Filch left and he sneered.

"I'm not going into that forest" he said in a slightly panicked voice. Bella giggled at it and he glared at her in annoyance.

"Yeh are if yeh want ter stay at Hogwarts," said Hagrid fiercely. "Yeh've done wrong an' now yeh've got ter pay fer it."

"But this is servant stuff, it's not for students to do. I thought we'd be copying lines or something, if my father knew I was doing this, he'd—" snapped Malfoy. Hagrid cut him off

"Tell yer that's how it is at Hogwarts," Hagrid growled. "Copyin' lines! What good's that ter anyone? Yeh'll do summat useful or yeh'll get out. If yeh think yer father'd rather you were expelled, then get back off ter the castle an' pack. Go on."

Malfoy didn't move. He just glared at him angrily and Hagrid nodded.

"Right then, now listen, carefully, 'cause it's dangerous what we're gonna do tonight, an' I don' want no one takin' risks. Follow me over here a mo'" Hagrid said. They followed him, slowly.

He explained how he wanted them to find the unicorn that was bleeding all over the place. Hagrid looked as if he was deciding the groups.

"Alrigh'. Draco and Bella will go with me or Fang. Hermione an' Ron will go with othe'" Hagrid decided. Malfoy decided before anyone could get their pick.

"I want Fang" he decided.

"All right, but I warn yeh, he's a coward," said Hagrid. " So me, Ron ,an' Hermione'll go one way an' Draco, Bella, an' Fang'll go the other. Now, if any of us finds the unicorn, we'll send up green sparks, right? Get yer wands out an' practice now - that's it - an' if anyone gets in trouble, send up red sparks, an' we'll all come an' find yeh - so, be careful - let's go" Hagrid said.

They went into the forest and Malfoy was quaking in his boots. Bella couldn't help but snicker. Typically, she'd be just as terrified if not more but right now she felt as if her guardian angel or something was watching her.

"What's so funny, Potter?" demanded Malfoy. Bella shook her head.

"Nothing..." she trailed off as she caught sight of someone pure white. The unicorn was on the ground.

It was absolutely beautiful, just like the one in her dream. Except this one was very real and very dead. Something within her cried for the dead creature and she didn't know why. Something in a cloak drifted over to where the unicorn was and lowered its head over the unicorn's wound before beginning to drink.

"AARRGHHHHH!" Malfoy screamed, his scream alerting the others she was sure. He took off running with Fang but Bella was rooted to the spot. The figure looked up and Bella shrieked, falling back. Her scar burned like it was on fire. She staggered back but was caught by strong arms. The pain disappeared as the person held her. She looked up, half-blinded and caught sight of crimson eyes before passed out.

She awoke again with a centaur looking over her with crystal clear blue eyes. She flinched at how clear and knowing they were.

"Are you all right?" he asked.

"What was that? Who saved me?" Bella asked. The centaur looked at her uncertainly. He looked at her forehead to see her red scar.

"You are the Potter girl. You had better get back to Hagrid. The forest is not safe right now, especially for you. Get on my back and I will tell you on the way. My name is Firenze" he added. Bella nodded before climbing onto his back shakily.

"What was that? And who saved me?" Bella asked again as they took off a trot. Firenze looked over his shoulder at her.

"Bella Potter, do you know what unicorn blood is used for?" Firenze answered with a question. Bella cleared her throat.

"Err...no. We've only used the horn and tail in Potions" she explained. Firenze nodded.

"That is because it is a monstrous thing, to slay a unicorn. Only one who has nothing to lose, and everything to gain, would commit such a crime. The blood of a unicorn will keep you alive, even if you are an inch from death, but at a terrible price. You have slain something

pure and defenseless to save yourself, and you will have but a half-life, a cursed life, from the moment the blood touches your lips" Firenze explained. Bella bit her lip, debating whether she should ask.

"Is it...possible to turn a unicorn...to taint their pureness?" asked Bella. Firenze looked at her strangely but tilted his head.

"It has never been done but to my understanding, if unicorn chooses a person with a Dark affinity so powerful that it overpowers anything then I suppose it could happen. But don't you wish to know who would be so desperate to drink the blood of something so amazing?" Firenze asked. Bella nodded as she catalogued the answer. Now she knew that the woman Tom had kissed was evil...she didn't understand but right now that wasn't the matter at hand.

"I do...but I don't understand. This has something to do with Philosopher's Stone...which is the Elixir of Life...someone's trying to get it!" Bella exclaimed. Firenze nodded, gravely.

"Can you think of nobody who has waited for years, who has clung to live, waiting for his chance to be back in power?" he asked. Bella froze as she reached where Hagrid and the others were running towards her.

"Grindelwald..."

...

A/N: Look, I know it's fast-paced but that's the point and don't get mad at me that frankly I'm sort of tired of her first year. Everything is so petty and shallow and I love the later books with all the mass amounts of angst and such. Well, Chamber of Secrets is going to be fun.

We get to have some fun with the twins...not Fred and George but the second set. Gideon and Ginny. I needed twins for my plot device. It was rather important yet annoying since I can't stand Ginny anymore and Gideon will be worst with his crush on Bella to the point of actually stalking her.

On another note, wow! I actually wrote this in a few hours as opposed to my normally day and a half. This is totally un-betaed.

Does anyone wish to be my beta? I'd love you forever!

Chapter VIII

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 4th of June 1992

5:00 PM

"I wish I knew what this means!" Bella exploded in anger. Ron and Hermione looked up at her in alarm as she rubbed her scar, irritably.

"What do you mean?" Ron asked, confused. Bella grit her teeth and resisted the urge to snap at him and took a deep breath.

"My scar keeps hurting...it happens only when I have the dreams" Bella said, whispering the last part. Ron didn't understand but Hermione did to an extent and she touch Bella's arm.

"The dreams? What are the dreams about?" Hermione murmured. Bella looked at her with tired eyes, dark circles under her eyes.

In truth, Bella didn't want to talk about the dreams. They had gotten worst. Instead of yelling across the battlefield there was actual battle and though all of the people on the magical creatures scared her, the woman who Tom usually kissed and protected was scariest. Tom and her fought together, always. It was like they were one and they were both fluid.

She could remember one time when Tom grabbed the woman's hand and swung her in a circle so she was shooting curses when they were surrounded. She had decapitated someone with her high heel and when someone had tried to kill Tom she had gone absolutely vicious.

"Chaos. Absolute chaos" she whispered. Hermione looked worried as she glimpsed at how tired Bella actually was.

"Go to Madam Pomfrey" she suggested. Bella shook her head and sighed, leaning on her hand.

"I'm not ill. It's a warning of when danger is coming...and it's coming tonight. I can feel it" Bella whispered. They all looked at each other and sighed, tiredly.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 4th of June 1992

9:30 PM

"Music...what possessed him to tell someone that! Is he stupid?" Bella hissed in anger as she and Hermione fetched Ron from his dorm. Hermione shrugged and inclined her head towards Bella.

"He's a little gullible but I don't think he's stupid. He just says the wrong things at the wrong time" Hermione explained. Bella smirked and crossed her arms as she pulled the cloak out.

"Well maybe he should be put into permanent silence...what made me say something like that?" Bella gaped. Hermione looked at her from the corner of her eye but said nothing. She couldn't.

She'd been thinking the exact same thing.

"Ron would you come on! We could've been there and back by now!" Hermione hissed in annoyance. Ron came lumbering from his dorm room and Bella was surprised that nobody had heard him. She shoved her hand in her pocket and felt the flute Hagrid had given her.

So it would definitely come into use...

They walked downstairs and were almost out of the portrait hole when someone squeaked. Bella and Hermione spun around, their wands out and the squeak turned a squeal before it went down.

"You're going out again" Neville said, quietly.

"No, no, no. No we're not. Why don't you go to bed?" Hermione said, kindly almost motherly. Bella sighed, not having time for this and raised her wand and took two steps forward until she was only one step away from Neville. Hermione dragged her back and took her place.

"Y-you c-can't go out again. You'll get caught again and lose more points for Gryffindor" Neville whispered. Bella snarled and she was

suddenly very angry between the pounding in her scar and Neville's behavior. She took a deep breath and tried to center herself.

"You don't understand...this is very important" she said as if talking to a two year old. Neville shook his head and raised his fists as if forgetting about his wand.

"I-I'll fight you..."

"Neville, put your fists down and don't be an idiot" Ron snapped, exploding from the short leash he was keeping himself on.

"Don't call me an idiot—"

"Look here, Neville...this isn't about Goddamned school points. This is life. This between life and death and I'll be damned if I'm going to die. I swear to God I'll make Grindelwald look like a fucking saint. So get out my way!" Bella hissed in rage. Neville took a step back and looked like he was about to scream.

"Stupefy" Hermione whispered. He fell down and was out cold. Bella smirked at Hermione.

"Thank you, sister" she murmured. Hermione smirked and nodded before they exited the portrait hole and went to the third floor corridor.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 4th of June 1992

10:10 PM

They were falling and falling into the darkness of the pit. Hermione's hand was wrapped in Bella's as they tumbled through the air into the vast unknown. She could hear herself screaming along with Hermione and Ron and it wasn't comfortable. Not at all...

Suddenly, she was on something thick and slimy and absolutely disgusting in her mind. As soon as she fell on it, black feelers slipped around her legs. She fell down as it entwined around her legs quickly and she began to struggle. Hermione grabbed her hand.

"Lucky this plant thing was here to stop our fall" Ron said. Hermione looked at him in disbelief.

"Lucky! Look at you! Don't move. I know what this is. Devil's Snare" Hermione said, annoyed. Ron gave her a snort and glared at her.

"Thanks for the trivia. It's great that we know what it's called and all but—" Ron started, sarcastically. Hermione had just given him a fearsome glare and he cowered a little.

"Shut up! I'm trying to remember how to kill it!"

"Well, maybe you could hurry up with that because I think it's about strangle me..." Bella remembered. Hermione tilted her head in intense thought and bit her lip.

"Devil's Snare, Devil's Snare, it likes the damp and dark..." Hermione whispered to herself. Bella gave her a look.

"Light a fire!" she commanded. Hermione looked at her in shock and looked around at her in absolute confusion.

"Yes, of course! But there's no wood..." she said, looking genuinely crestfallen. Ron growled at her before exploding.

"HAVE YOU GONE ABSOLUTELY STARK-RAVING MAD? ARE YOU A WITCH OR NOT?"

"Oh...right. Incendio!" she shouted. Fire burst from the end of her wand and exploded over the plant. It burned it horribly and there seemed to be a shriek as it cringed away from the light. They pulled free of the Devil's Snare and walked away from it as quickly as possible. They went to the wall where a passageway was. They heard a sound and Hermione's eyes widened.

"This way" Bella said, feeling that they were going the right way.

"Can you hear something?" he asked.

"It's not exactly quiet, Ron" Hermione retorted in annoyance. Ron sent her a withering look but they continued walking.

"Shut up! It sounds like...like wings" Bella murmured.

They reached the end of the passageway to see a large high ceiling room filled with large flying glittering objects. Broomsticks lie to the side of the room. There was a large wooden door at the other side of the room. Ron crossed it a long stride and slammed his shoulder against it. Bella and Hermione exchanged eye-rolls.

"Ron, it needs a key. I think...that those things are keys. Winged keys...we have to get the one that matches the lock. But there are hundreds of them. This could take all night" Bella sighed, almost giving in. Ron examined the lock and shook his head.

"It may not...we'll be looking for a big and old fashioned one. Probably silver, like the doorknob" Ron suggested. Bella nodded and looked up. She could see one in the corner of the room, hanging out while the other caused chaos. Bella grabbed a broom and kicked off, going up to where it was.

It had a broken wing as if it had already been grabbed roughly and shoved into the lock. It flew to the other corner and Bella shot there just as fast before grabbing it delicately. She went back down and put it in the keyhole.

"We definitely can't go back now. Are you guys ready?" Bella asked. Ron and Hermione looked at her like she was stupid.

"We can't exactly go back now. Come on" Hermione said, pushing the door open. They walked into a gigantic chamber. As soon as they stepped onto the marble floor fire erupted around the platform they seemed to be on.

It was an astonishing sight they saw next. They were standing on a gigantic chessboard with gigantic chess pieces. There were spaces on the black side and they looked at it curiously.

"We've got to play our way across" Ron said, his eyes wide in delight. Bella nodded and looked at him for instruction.

"How?" said Hermione, quizzically and not at all nervously.

"I think," said Ron, "we're going to have to be chessmen."

He walked up to a black knight and put his hand out to touch the knight's horse. At once, the stone sprang to life. The horse pawed the ground and the knight turned his helmeted head to look down at Ron.

"Do we...err...have to join you to get across?" The black knight nodded. Ron turned to the other two.

"This needs thinking about he said. I suppose we've got to take the place of three of the black pieces..."

Bella and Hermione stayed quiet, watching Ron think.

Finally he said, "Now, don't be offended or anything, but neither of you are that good at chess..."

"We're not offended. I don't really care for chess anyway" said Bella quickly.

"Just tell us what to do" Hermione agreed.

"Well, Bella, you take the place of that bishop, and Hermione, YOU 90next to him instead of that castle."

"What about you?"

"I'm going to be a knight," said Ron.

The chessmen seemed to have been listening, because at these words a knight, a bishop, and a castle turned their backs on the white pieces and walked off the board, leaving three empty squares that Bella, Ron, and Hermione took.

"White always plays first in chess," said Ron, peering across the board.

"Yes... look..." Bella said, pointing.

A white pawn had moved forward two squares

Ron started to direct the black pieces. They moved silently wherever he sent them. Harry's knees were trembling. What if they lost?

"Bella, move diagonally four squares to the right" Ron commanded. They continued to play until they soon learned what would happen when a chess piece was taken.

The white queen smashed the other knight to the floor and dragged him off the board, where he lay quite still, facedown.

"Had to let that happen. Leaves you free to take that bishop, Hermione, go on" Ron said, shakily. But though he was frightened he was in his element of strategy. And he wasn't going to back down.

Every time one of their men was lost, the white pieces showed no mercy. Soon there was a huddle of limp black players slumped along the wall. Twice, Ron had almost let Bella and Hermione were about to be crushed before instructing them to move a danger free area. He himself darted around the board, taking almost as many white pieces as they had lost black ones.

"We're nearly there. Let me think let me think..." he murmured to himself. He let the white move and he wasn't surprised on the move that the queen had chosen.

She had turned to face him.

"Yes..." said Ron softly, "It's the only way... I've got to be taken."

"Ron...are you sure? Is there not another way?" Hermione shouted.

"That's chess! Sometimes you've got to make some sacrifices to win! I take one step forward and she'll take me and that leaves you free to checkmate the king, Bella!" Ron snapped. Bella looked at him with wavering eyes.

She wanted to win, feel victory over this challenge. But at the same time, she didn't want her friend to get hurt.

He stepped forward, and the white queen pounced. She struck Ron hard across the head with her stone arm, and he crashed to the floor.

Hermione shrieked as he fell and the white queen dragged Ron to one side. He looked as if he'd been knocked out.

"Ron!" Hermione shouted. She almost stepped from her place when Bella held up her hand.

"Wait! We're still playing" Bella reminded her. Hermione nodded once.

The Girl-Who-Lived moved three spaces to the left. The white king took off his crown and threw it at Bella's feet. They had won. The fire on the other side of the board ceased to exist, leaving the door ahead clear. With one last desperate look back at Ron, Bella and Hermione ran through the door and up the next passageway.

"What if he's...dead?" Hermione whispered.

"He'll be all right. And if he isn't he would've died for a worthy cause," said Bella. Hermione looked at her in shock.

"You can't mean that, Bell" she said. Bella didn't show any reaction about her new nickname and shook her head.

"I do mean that, Mione. And it is for a worthy cause. No one should have that kind of power. And no one should rely on power that isn't his or her own. That is failure and that is losing" Bella said, quietly. Hermione nodded in acceptance, knowing that it wouldn't make a difference if she argued with Bella about it all night.

"What do you reckon is next?" Bella asked.

"We've had Sprout's, that was the Devil's Snare; Flitwick must've put charms on the keys; McGonagall transfigured the chessmen to make them alive; that leaves Quirrell's trap, and Snape's" Hermione reasoned out. Bella nodded in agreement as they opened the door.

"OH HOLY MOTHER OF MERLIN! WHAT IS THAT FUCKING SMELL?" Bella shouted in disgust.

As soon as they had opened the door an unholy and eye-watering smell had come over them. Hermione shoved her hand over her nose and glanced over at Bella in alarm.

"I didn't know you had a sailor's mouth..." Hermione said, though her hand muffled her speech. Bella pinched her nose and gave her

a look. How didn't she know? She had periodically cursed in her ranting about Tom.

"Does it really matter right now?" Bella asked, flatly. Hermione ignored her before inspecting the room.

Flat on the ground in front of them was a troll. It was much larger than the one Bella and Hermione (with minimum help from Ron) had been able to hold off. The disgusting creature was passed out with a bump on its head the size of a dragon egg.

"Glad we didn't have to deal with that" Hermione said, quietly. Bella nodded in quiet agreement. They walked past the troll, quietly, still afraid that they might wake it up. Hermione wrenched the door open and Bella looked around.

There was a simple table with seven differently shaped bottles of what looked like potions. Bella and Hermione stepped over the threshold. As soon as they stepped through, purple flames erupted behind them. Black flames blocked their other exit that went onward.

"Cursed flames...what is with Hogwarts teachers and flames!" Bella complained. Hermione rolled her eyes and turned back to the room. She walked towards the table and picked up a roll of parchment.

"I'll read:

Danger lies before you, while safety lies behind,

Two of us will help you, which ever you would find,

One among us seven will let you move ahead,

Another will transport the drinker back instead,

Two among our number hold only nettle wine,

Three of us are killers, waiting bidden in line.

Choose, unless you wish to stay here forevermore,

To help you in your choice, we give you these clues four:

First, however slyly the poison tries to hide

You will always find some on nettle wine's left side;

Second, different are those who stand at either end,

But if you would move onward, neither is your friend;

Third, as you see clearly, all are different size,

Neither dwarf nor giant holds death in their insides;

Fourth, the second left and the second on the right

Are twins once you taste them, though different at first sight"

Hermione read aloud. Bella tilted her head and growled to herself. Hermione looked at her in surprise and Bella crossed her arms.

"I'm not good at puzzles. Especially, riddles. I suck at them" Bella explained. Hermione's face grew a Cheshire grin.

"Riddle, eh?"

"Not the time, Mione. Of course, I don't know how to deal with my abusive professor who happens to also be my magical guardian who gives me detentions like it's candy. Can we get on with this?" Bella snapped. Hermione shrugged and looked at the paper again.

"This is brilliant. Absolutely brilliant. A lot of the greatest wizards don't have an ounce of logic so they'd be stuck here. We won't. Seven bottles: three are poison, two are wine, one will get us safely through the black fire, and the last will get us through the purple"

Hermione murmured to herself. Bella had to strain to hear her but nodded along with her.

"So, do you have the answer yet?" Bella asked, thirty seconds later. Hermione looked at her from the corner of her eye and sighed.

"If I tell you I do will you promise not to stay with me?" Hermione asked. Bella shrugged, not understanding the question. Hermione lifted the bottle and handed it to Bella.

It was the smallest and there was barely a swallow left in it. Bella suddenly understood and she grabbed Hermione's hand and shook her head.

"No, no, no, no! I can't do this without you" Bella said, her mask of confidence finally slipping off and shattering. Hermione jerked away and looked Bella in the eye with a hard look that reminded Bella of the woman in her family...Hermione.

Hermione was that woman.

"Yes you can, Bell. Go. I'll go back to Ron" Hermione said, quietly. Bella nodded, weakly. She had just discovered part of her family. And she knew she would discover the last two, quickly.

"Grab the broomstick in the key room and go up to the trapdoor. Get Professor Riddle. And then send a letter to Dumbledore. You hear me? I don't think it's Snape in there. I think it's someone much, much, much worse" Bella said, quietly. Hermione nodded in understanding.

"You think it's Grindelwald."

"No...I know it is. And I won't lose. Because I won't let me lose. Go Mione" Bella said, quietly. Hermione jumped on Bella, hugging her fiercely.

"You're a great witch, Bella" Hermione whispered. Bella chuckled and shook her head.

"Not as great as you" Bella said, rubbing the back of her head, self-consciously. Hermione laughed and shook her head.

"Me! I know books, cleverness, and the stray Dark spell. There are more important things...like bravery, loyalty, cunning, and intelligence. Be careful, Bell" Hermione whispered. Bella kissed her cheek and nodded.

"I will be. I promise" she said before downing the potion and stepping through. She walked into the last chamber and she couldn't say she was surprised.

"You" was what she said as she crossed into the chamber.

Quirrell looked back at her with a patient smile on his face. Bella's eyes were hard, like the precious jewel that they were the color of.

"Me. I wonder when I'd be meeting you here, Miss Potter" Quirrell said. Bella noticed that he wasn't stuttering and suddenly, she realized that this was what he really sounded like when he wasn't forcing the stuttering.

But something was off about him...

"So it was you all along. You had me fooled for a minute. I had actually thought it was Snape. But now it makes so much more sense" Bella said, her nails digging into the palms of her hands.

Her scar felt as if it were on fire.

"Severus? Yes, Severus does seem the time, doesn't he? He's like an overgrown bat. What child wouldn't suspect Severus Snape of doing something terrible? Who would suspect s-st-stuttering P-P-Pro-Professor Quirrel?" baited Quirrell. Bella stared at him and growled at him.

"Don't stutter! You tried to kill me. But I bet Hermione setting Snape's robes on fire distracted you. Am I right?" demanded Bella. Quirrell smirked at the girl and nodded before looking at her peculiarly.

"But...I didn't expect your eyes to turn crimson. That was a surprise. What was that magic anyway? It was so dark...so delicious" Quirrell said, almost hungrily. Bella took a step back and glared at him.

"I'm not going to tell you! Snape refereed the game to protect me. From you. I heard you in the forest and I thought that he was threatening you. But now I see that he was onto you. He knew what you were trying to do and trying to stop you. You're a fool, Quirrell" Bella spat. Quirrell smirked.

"Am I? Bella, I think it's time I introduce you to someone who has been wishing to meet you for so very long" Quirrell said. He closed his eyes and suddenly they flashed open. They were no longer dark. They were navy. And tainted.

"Hello, Bella Potter. I am Gellert Grindelwald" he said. Bella gritted her teeth and glared at him.

"Hello, Gellert Grindelwald. I'm your executioner" Bella snapped back. Grindelwald gave a hearty laugh before snapping his fingers. Ropes appeared from thin air and bound her hands by the wrists.

"Are you? Come here" Grindelwald said. Bella didn't move and he grabbed her by her neck and dragged her forward. Bella's eyes widened when she saw that she was kneeling in front of the Mirror of Erised.

Her family was there and she could easily recognize Hermione now that she knew who she was. Mirror-Tom held a red stone in his hand that he was tossing up and down, up and down. He smirked at her and then turned the mirror-Bella. He held it out to her and the mirror-Bella grabbed it. She winked at the real Bella before dropping it in her pockets and crossing her arms.

A weight appeared in her pocket and her eyes widened. The Philosopher's Stone had just appeared in her pocket, miraculously. It occurred to her that this must be Dumbledore's test.

"What do you see, Bella Potter?" Grindelwald asked, standing behind her. Bella looked up at him and spat.

"What do you see old man? Dumbledore and you snogging?" Bella retorted. Grindelwald's hand flew at her face and she slammed into the mirror from the force of the slap. She heard the crack of her jaw but the pain paled to the pain in her scar.

"Shut up, child! Give me the Stone! It's in your pocket! Give it to me!" he screamed at her. Bella pulled at the ropes as hard as she could, giving herself rope burn but breaking the ropes. She sighed in relief.

"No!" she shrieked back. Grindelwald took a deep breath and held out his hand.

"I only wish for a body of my own, Bella. This body is too weak to host all of my powers and to share a mind with. Will you not allow me that one thing?" Grindelwald asked, almost kindly. Bella sneered at him and glared.

"When hell freezes over!" Bella shrieked.

"Don't be a foolish girl! It would be more prudent for you to save your own life and give me the Stone. Or you might meet the same end as your parents. They died begging me for mercy" Grindelwald taunted. Bella snarled.

"LIAR! YOU GODDAMNED LIAR!"

"How touching. I always value courage, my dear girl. You parents were brave. I took down your father first and he gave up a courageous fight. But you mother didn't have to die. She was powerful, I could tell. And she actually drew her wand against me. She was trying to protect you. Now give me the Stone or her sacrifice will be in vain" Grindelwald said, persuasively. Bella closed her eyes and looked in the mirror again. Tom's eyes were crimson as were hers.

"Don't give the Stone...don't give it!"

Bella glared at him with crimson eyes and he took a step back as she growled at him.

"You can go to hell if you think I'll let you take the Stone. I know the spell...I won't hesitate to kill you. I'd rather go to Azkaban then see you walk with that Stone" Bella snapped. Grindelwald became reckless then and he threw himself at her. She grabbed around his neck and he began to writhe in pain.

She didn't know when Tom and Dumbledore arrived. She didn't realize that they were standing in the doorway, watching her torture Quirrell. Wherever her fingers touched he burned and blistered, turning to ash. She didn't realize until she caught sight of matching crimson eyes looking down at her as the world around her turned into the blissful dark.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Monday the 8th of June 1992

3:00 PM

Bella's eyes flashed open and she squinted in the bright light. She could see dark figures but couldn't make out any shapes. She

blinked her eyes open to see Tom, half asleep next to her and Dumbledore eating lemon drops.

"Marvolo...wake up" Bella hissed. Tom looked up with dark eyes and his eyes widened.

"You're awake. Do you know how incredibly reckless that was? You could've died. You could've poisoned yourself. You could've burned! Grindelwald could've killed you!" Tom said, immensely annoyed. Bella looked at him with heavy lidded eyes. He was ranting her to sleep.

"Are you done with your panic attack?" she murmured. He glared at her before standing up.

"I don't panic. Tom Marvolo Riddle, the Heir of Slytherin, doesn't panic. Nagini was worried, that's all. Have a good day, brat" snapped Tom before leaving briskly. She turned to Dumbledore who was smiling brightly.

"Good afternoon, Bella. I'm sorry about Tom. He was deeply worried and he has problems with expressing his feelings" Dumbledore said, cheerfully. Bella could see he looked slightly depressed and tired but aside from that he was genuinely happy to see Bella alive. Which reminded her...

"Sir! It was Quirrell! And Grindelwald! The Stone!" Bella cried out. Dumbledore patted her shoulder as she tried to sit up and she groaned in pain. She glanced down. She was in the same clothes she had been wearing. Her wrists were wrapped in gauze and the cut and scrapes she had gotten from the shards of flying chessboard pieces were gone.

"Calm down, my dear girl. You are a little behind times. Quirrell does not have it" Dumbledore said. Bella looked at him frantically.

"Then what...what is all this?" Bella asked, looking at her bedside table. It looked like a candy shop had thrown up on it and she could see almost every single type of candy piled there. Dumbledore chuckled at her bewildered expression.

"Tokens from your friends and admirers. What happened down in the dungeons between you and Professor Quirrell is a complete secret..." Dumbledore trailed off. Bella cut him off.

"So, naturally, the whole school knows about it" she cut in. Dumbledore gave another chuckle.

"Naturally. You've been in here for three days and Miss Hermione Granger and Mister Ronald Weasley are very worried. Almost as worried as Tom was" Dumbledore said. Bella sighed in annoyance that he had managed to distract her from the matter at hand.

"Sir, the Stone..." she reminded him. He nodded as if he had forgotten all about it. Or he had wanted to.

"I see you are not to be distracted. Quirrell couldn't take the Stone. You almost killed him. He was just alive enough to almost grab the Stone when Tom interrupted and killed him. Rather viciously, as well, may I add. Your eyes were a most peculiar shade of crimson" Dumbledore said rather blasé. Bella nodded.

"It's only happened once before. When a voice whispers to me in Parseltongue not to die. What happened to the Stone?" Bella asked. Dumbledore nodded.

"It has been destroyed" was his simple answer. Bella leaned forward in shock and winced when she rested her weight on her wrists. She pulled back and leaned against the wall the bed was up against.

"But sir...you're friend, Nicholas Flamel! He'll die" Bella said in shock. Dumbledore's grin returned.

"Oh! You know about Nicholas. You did do your research, correctly. Well Nicholas and I have had a little chat and we've agreed it is for the best. He and his wife have just enough Elixir to set their affairs in order before they will die" Dumbledore said, sounding delighted. Bella looked at him as if he were insane before dying.

"I guess it is for the best. No one should be allowed that type of power. Well maybe Flamel. He did create it. Everyone should rely on their own magic. Because that is what victory is" Bella said, strongly. Dumbledore gave her a faint smile.

"I've been thinking, sir. Now that the Stone's gone, G-Grin—" Bella stammered, not even able to finish the name. He had scared. He really had. He was certifiably insane, she could tell.

"Call him Grindelwald, Bella. Always use the proper name for things. Fear of a name increases fear of the thing itself" Dumbledore said, kindly. Bella nodded and cleared her throat.

"I don't fear his name. I fear what he did to me almost succeeded in doing. He took away my free will...and he had physically assaulted me. It's not the same as someone casting a spell on you. He actually broke my jaw, I think. It's much more frightening" Bella said, quietly. Dumbledore patted her shoulder, gently.

"But you are safe now, Bella. He most likely slapped you because you discovered the truth" Dumbledore said, kindly. Bella froze up at the thought as she remembered what instigated the slap.

"What do you see old man? Dumbledore and you snogging?"

"Right...I want to know the truth about a lot of things, sir. Grindelwald is going to find another way to get a body, right? He's not truly gone. And other things..." Bella trailed off. Dumbledore smiled at her.

"The truth. It is a beautiful and terrible thing, and should therefore be treated with great caution. However, I shall answer your questions unless I have a very good reason not to, in which case I beg you'll forgive me. I shall not, of course, lie. I will simply be unable to tell you" Dumbledore sighed. Bella nodded.

"Grindelwald said that he only killed my mother because she tried to stop him from killing me. But why would he want to kill me in the first place?" Bella prompted. Dumbledore sighed heavily.

"Alas, the first thing you ask me, I cannot tell you. Not today. Not now. You will know, one day... put it from your mind for now, Bella. When you are older and I know you'll hate to hear this...when you are ready, you will know" was his answer. Bella wanted to argue but she knew it wouldn't matter. He wouldn't budge.

"But why couldn't Quirrell touch me?" prompted Bella, hoping he could answer this. Dumbledore's eyes hardened and turned to blue shards of ice. She looked at him in surprise.

"Your mother died to save you. If there is one thing Grindelwald cannot understand, it is love. He didn't realize that love as powerful as your mother's for you leaves its own mark. Not a scar, no visible sign... to have been loved so deeply, even though the person who loved us is gone, will give us some protection forever. It is in your very skin. Quirrell, full of hatred, greed, and ambition, sharing his soul with Grindelwald, could not touch you for this reason. It was agony to touch a person marked by something so good" Dumbledore said in a chilled voice. Bella nodded and gave a slight snuffle

Dumbledore now became very interested in a bird out on the windowsill.

Bella next asked, "And the invisibility cloak. Do you know who sent it to me?"

"Ah. Your father happened to leave it in my possession, and I thought you might like it." Dumbledore's eyes twinkled now and were warmer; far from the shard they were when he was talking about Grindelwald and love.

"Useful things... your father used it mainly for sneaking off to the kitchens to steal food when he was here" Dumbledore continued. Bella couldn't help but grin at the information.

"Oh and one more thing...how did I get the Stone from the mirror? All I know was that one of the people in my new family was tossing it up and down before giving it to my reflection before my reflection pocketed it. How did it get to me?" Bella asked. Dumbledore seemed to be surprised but didn't ask any questions.

"Ah, now, I'm glad you asked me that. It was one of my more brilliant ideas, and between you and me, that's saying something. You see, only one who wanted to find the Stone, find it, but not use it, would be able to get it, otherwise they'd just see themselves making gold or drinking Elixir of Life. My brain surprises even me sometimes. Now, enough questions. I suggest you make a start on these sweets. Ah! Bertie Bott's Every Flavor Beans! I was unfortunate enough in

my youth to come across a vomit flavored one, and since then I'm afraid I've rather lost my liking for them. But I think I'll be safe with a nice toffee, don't you?" asked Dumbledore. Bella shrugged as he popped it into his mouth. He gave a funny little grimace.

"Alas! Ear wax!" he choked. Bella couldn't help but giggle.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Monday the 8th of June 1992

7:00 PM

Bella entered the Great Hall after almost everyone else and as she entered there was a collective hush until the gossip started up. But all Bella could see was green and silver. It almost made her have a heart attack. She was already hyperventilating when she finally sat down next to Hermione and Ron. Hermione threw her arms around her and Bella hugged her back, gingerly.

"Careful there. I'm still sore. I broke my jaw as you know. Mione, you can get off now" Bella said. Hermione still didn't let her go and Bella snorted.

"Mione...you saw me alive not an hour ago. You can seriously let go" Bella giggled. Hermione let go and blushed rather sheepishly. She shook her head and sighed.

"I was just so scared!" Hermione said, quietly. Bella laughed and shook her head. Ron looked at her in confusion.

"Wait...how did you break your jaw again? I think you were telling that when I was eating chocolate frogs" Ron said. Bella rolled her eyes and crossed her arms.

"Grindelwald slapped me and smashed my head into the mirror. Anyway, where's the food? I haven't eaten a real meal in three days! I'm starving" Bella confessed. Hermione snorted at Bella's antics. But the food didn't show up. Instead Dumbledore stood.

"Another year gone!" Dumbledore said cheerfully.

"And I must trouble you with an old man's wheezing waffle before we sink our teeth into our delicious feast. What a year it has been! Hopefully your heads are all a little fuller than they were... you have the whole summer ahead to get them nice and empty before next year starts. Now, as I understand it, the House Cup here needs awarding, and the points stand thus: In fourth place, Gryffindor, with three hundred and twelve points; in third, Hufflepuff, with three hundred and fifty-two; Ravenclaw has four hundred and twenty-six and Slytherin, four hundred and seventy- two," he continued

A storm of cheering and stamping broke out from the Slytherin table. Bella sneered and could see Draco Malfoy banging his goblet on the table. Snape looked victorious, the slimy git.

And Tom was smirking right at Bella, obviously very amused. Bella frowned and glared at the table. She could feel the looks on her. They could've won the House Cup if it wasn't for her and her stupid midnight escapade.

"Yes, Yes, well done, Slytherin," said Dumbledore, genuinely happy for them it seemed. Bella couldn't see why.

"However, recent events must be taken into account."

The room went very still. The Slytherins' smiles faded a little. Bella's smile spread and Tom's smirk was falling, very fast.

"Ahem, I have a few last-minute points to dish out. Let me see. Yes...first to Mr. Ronald Weasley..."

Ron went purple in the face; he looked like a happy and prideful plum with a really bad sunburn.

"...For the best-played game of chess Hogwarts has seen in many years, I award Gryffindor house fifty points" Dumbledore said, nodding to Ron.

Gryffindor cheers nearly raised the bewitched ceiling; the stars overhead seemed to quiver.

Percy was yelling over the din to the other prefects, "My brother, you know! My youngest brother! Got past McGonagall's giant chess set!"

Soon silence reigned and Tom's lip was curling into a sneer. He seemed to know what was happening next.

"Second, to Miss Hermione Granger... for the use of cool logic and intellect in the face of fire, I award fifty points to Gryffindor house" Dumbledore said. Now, people were absolutely shocked and couldn't even cheer.

"Third, to Bella Potter, for pure nerve and outstanding loyalty, cunning, and courage, I award Gryffindor house, sixty points" Dumbledore continued. Bella froze and looked at him with wide eyes. Her eyes shifted to Tom's face and he was staring at her with an unfathomable expression. He flashed her a slight smile but a smile nonetheless.

This shocked her and she jolted in her seat. Tom's soft smile turned into a wicked smirk of triumph. Everyone was screaming and shouting. They were now tied with Slytherin. The Slytherins' smiles were sliding off and some were grimacing.

"There are all kinds of courage. It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to your enemies but even more to stand up to your friends. I therefore award fifteen points to Neville Longbottom" Dumbledore said. Everyone was shocked into silence.

Neville had never earned not one point for Gryffindor before.

"Which means...we need a little change in decoration" Dumbledore said. He clapped his hands and everything turned to scarlet and gold. Cheers were heard and Bella whooped and stood up clapping loudly for Neville. Even Hufflepuff and Ravenclaw were cheering for them as they were also tired of Slytherins' reign.

Bella watched as Snape gave a forced smile as he shook McGonagall's hand. McGonagall looked immensely smug. Tom winked at her before leaning back and crossing his arms and assuming the proper grimace since he was a Slytherin.

All in all it was the best night of Bella's life.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 20th of June 1992

9:45 AM

"Morning, Marvolo" Bella said, quietly, standing in the open doorway. Tom looked up from the library that he had been packing and he smirked at her.

"Good morning, brat. Aren't you supposed to be boarding the train?" Tom asked. Bella snorted and waved her hand.

"In fifteen minutes. I'll have to run so I sent Ron and Hermione with my trunk" Bella said, nonchalantly. Tom nodded and ran a hand through his loose black hair. Bella had never seen it out of its low ponytail and it was so silky looking that she had the resist the urge to touch it and see if it was as silky as it looked.

"Why are you here?" Tom asked, quietly. Bella sighed and shrugged.

"You're my favorite teacher. I wanted to say goodbye. And to give you the book" Bella said, quietly, producing the book that was filled with her notes on the language. She was a quarter through the ancient tome and she wanted to finish it soon. But not that summer.

"Why?" was his simple question.

"Because...I can't show Sirius. He'll flip. The elves are a dead ancient race and Druhir is the language of the dead. I can't bring this home. And he likes to snoop. So, hold it for me until you can hand me another detention?" Bella asked. Tom nodded and accepted the book.

"Goodbye, brat" Tom said, quietly. Bella nodded and Tom crossed over to her. He put his hand on her head and ruffled it. She glared at him and he smirked.

"See you, Marvolo."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 20th of June 1992

4:00 PM

The trio walked through the barrier together.

"See you, Bella!"

"Bye, Potter!"

"Still famous" smirked Ron. Bella shot him a sneaky grin and shrugged.

"Always. But I know you'll never treat me that way" Bella sighed. Ron nodded and Hermione smirked.

"We wouldn't want you getting a big head..." she said, smirking. Bella grinned.

"Look, Mum! It's Bella Potter!" a voice said.

A redhead boy who looked a tiny bit younger than Bella had said this. Ron grimaced and Bella could tell that he was his younger brother, Gideon, who he had complained about.

"Be quiet, Gideon, it's rude to point" Mrs. Weasley said. She looked at the approaching trio.

"Busy year?" she asked with a knowing smile.

"You could say so...thanks for the sweater, Mrs. Weasley" Bella said. Hermione reiterated what she had said and also thanked Mrs. Weasley. A hand landed on Bella's head and she turned around.

"UNCLE SIRIUS!" she said, happily. She jumped on him and hugged him fiercely as he hugged her back.

"Bella, I missed you so much and you're in so much trouble when we get home..." Sirius said, in her ear. Bella snorted as she leaned back.

"Already knew that...the Howler was rather loud."

...

A/N: I'm done! I'm finally done! I've succeeded in completing Philosopher's Stone! Chamber of Secrets has to be arranged

without Tom being discovered but I think I have something figured out...we'll see. I'll have to get some advice.

Anyway, next chapter will be the awesomely short (only 2000 or so words) Interlude! It will be completely Tom. Bella will not appear. Sorry but I need it. He needs to have enlightenment.

Interlude I

Godric Hollow, West Country, England

Monday the 6th of July 1992

11:45 PM

"Uncle...what are you doing in here? It's dangerous" Tom said, his arms crossed as he leaned in the doorway of the decrepit cottage. Sitting in the chair in front of a roaring fire was a young man with dark brown hair. His eyes were navy and he had a slightly and pleasant smile on his face.

"Tom! Come in, come in" he said, gesturing to the other armchair. Tom walked in, stiffly, his movements almost mechanical. He sat across from the fire and looked deep into it.

"Uncle Gellert, why are you in your old house? Dumbledore, the fool, comes almost every night. What is the purpose of being in a place where he could easily find you?" demanded Tom. Gellert looked unconcerned and this made Tom grit his teeth in anger.

"Is Albus coming tonight?" Gellert asked. Tom sighed and rolled his eyes at his 'uncle's' disregard for his own safety. He was entirely too confident.

"No. Minerva was able to stop him from coming tonight. Said it was bad for his health. What possessed you to do something as stupid as steal the Stone? You told me you were going to wait for me to take it and then you go make Snape suspicious by possessing Quirrell of all people!" Tom ranted. Gellert smirked and rolled his eyes.

"He had the weakest mind barriers. And you were taking entirely too long. I got a little...ah, desperate. Hmm, what happened to the Stone? I'm sure I can find another opportunity" Gellert said, cheerfully. Tom snorted and Gellert looked at him curiously and Tom ran a hand through his loose hair.

"The Stone was destroyed."

"WHAT?" Gellert roared, standing up. Tom was staring at him with a blasé expression, entirely too used to the sudden mood changes.

"You heard me. We'll have to put our plans on hold for now. No matter..." Tom said, lightly, as if he didn't care. Gellert suddenly grabbed Tom by his collar and Tom's wand was out in the blink of an eye. Gellert released him immediately.

He knew who was the more powerful of the two. Tom had always been more powerful and he had lived the past, almost twelve years without him. He had taken control of the situation and he knew that he wasn't just Gellert's underling anymore.

He was his lord.

"Don't ever grab me like I am your child, Gellert" he whispered dangerously. Gellert settled back into his seat but didn't respond.

"As I was saying, we'll have to alter our plans. You do not have a body so we cannot plant one of my Horcruxes. I wouldn't work. Everyone already knows that I am the Heir of Slytherin. So, after some thinking I decided that we should use one of yours" Tom suggested. Gellert stared at him as if he were insane.

"Do you need to go to the Janus Thickey Ward at St. Mungo's? You're mad! I'm not using one of my Horcruxes! I only have four! You have six" Gellert protested. Tom rolled his eyes.

"That may be but I can't afford to destroy a bit of my soul, though it may only be the tiniest slivers. Your magical core deteriorates and that can't happen. Now, I believe that we will use your necklace" Tom said, nonchalantly. Gellert sighed and thought over the possibilities.

"I suppose it could work...it would make them want the Hallows and I don't want anyone to get my wand" Gellert said, contritely. Tom let out a loud laugh and Gellert looked at him confused.

"Uncle, the Elder Wand is no longer yours to command. The master of the Elder Wand is...Bella Potter" Tom said. Gellert's eyes widened when he heard Tom's voice go softer when he spoke the name of the adversary.

"Because the curse rebounded...speaking of Bella Potter...when can I expect that she will die?" Gellert asked, nonchalantly. Tom still had that look in his eyes before he turned his stare onto Gellert.

"Never."

"What do you mean 'never'?" demanded Gellert.

"I mean she will never die. I will not allow it. She and I are bound, mind, body, and magic. Her death will only make room for my own, thus she may not die" Tom said, softly. Gellert growled in anger and stood up. Tom stood up as well and they glared at each other.

"That is not the reason you wish to keep her alive. You always find a way to avoid death. Speak the truth" Gellert snapped. Tom glared at him.

"I do not lie, Gellert. Bella Potter will not die. I will kill you before I let any harm come to her. Is this clear?" Tom said, steely voiced. Gellert glared at him and wrapped his hand around the golden necklace around his neck. He tore it off and threw it at Tom who easily caught it.

"Crystal. Let's not dwell on that. Now, Tom, there must be a rendezvous point and you must pick a target" Gellert said, his teeth grinding together in annoyance. Tom smirked at him.

"In this chess game called life, I'm always steps ahead. The rendezvous point will be the Library of Ravenclaw, her personal domain. It is said that a fearsome creature guards it. As an Heir, I may be able to open it. The beast is said to be the all-intelligent creature. The one that knows all and knows nothing" Tom said, with a slight smirk on his face. Gellert nodded.

"Ah...I see...what about the Basilisk in the Chamber of Secrets? What will you do with it?" Gellert asked, curiously. Tom looked affronted and glared at him. Gellert watched in surprise. What was he annoyed about?

"The basilisk is not an it. She will aid Victory" Tom said. Gellert's eyes widened as he looked at him in wonder.

"You mean you've found them. The Horsemen?" Gellert asked, hungrily. Tom shook his head and suddenly looked quite disappointed. He only revealed this side to Gellert, someone he had come to see as an incredibly evil uncle.

"I've found one of the four. I have my suspicions but I only know one for sure. If we get Victory onto our side we will surely win. Victory...is Bella Potter" Tom said, quietly. Gellert's jaw dropped now and he crossed his legs.

"Are you absolutely sure? I don't believe I would've killed Victory. She would have a potent aura, I'm sure, that would alert me to her identity" Gellert pointed out. Tom smirked and tilted his head.

"Her aura...is as Dark as mine. It is crimson. The color of blood. The color of triumph" Tom said, proudly. Gellert's eyes widened and he tilted his head as if in thought. Tom couldn't decipher what he was thinking and knew it was futile to try and access his mind. He would voice his opinions anyway.

"We could transfer the power to another person, I'm sure. She is too much of a liability, too drowned in the Light. We could never use her. She'll have to be eliminated, Tom. And I know you do not wish for her to die but it's all for the greater good" Gellert said, sounding earnest but in fact he wasn't. He looked calculating and cold and Tom gave him a look of cold fury. Gellert almost flinched. Almost.

"You will do no such thing. I will tell you again, Uncle. I will destroy you. I am much stronger than you could ever dream of being" Tom said, dangerously. Gellert waved his hand and nodded.

"Yes, yes, yes. Let's talk about targets now, my dear boy" Gellert said. Tom's eyes twitched. He didn't appreciate the nickname, nor did he like being dismissed and addressed as a child when he was already 65, no matter how young he looked.

"Don't call me that! You sound like Dumbledore and I haven't been a boy for 48 years" Tom snapped. He watched as Gellert's eyes softened when he mentioned Dumbledore. Tom made a sound of disgust in the back of his throat.

He heard the tragic tale of Dumbledore and Gellert and it always disgusted him. Not because they had been in love. Oh not that,

though Tom couldn't see what was appealing about Dumbledore and his creepy twinkling eyes. It was the fact that Gellert had almost sacrificed everything he worked for, for the man. But he didn't and that was the point.

"Fine. Do you have a suggestion for a target?" demanded Gellert, impatiently. Tom could only smirk.

"How about two?"

...

A/N: And thus ends Interlude I. So, it's time to pick a new quote for Part 2 of the story. The story is in seven parts and an epilogue. Seven parts because seven is the ultimate and most powerful, magically wise, number. See you next time! I think I have to think up a schedule for this...

Anyone want to beta me?

Chapter IX

"What is love?

Love is when one person knows all of your secrets...

Your deepest, darkest, most dreadful secrets

Of which no one else in the world knows...

And yet in the end, that one person does not think any less of you;

Even if the rest of the world does."

Anonymous

Number 12, Grimmauld Place, London, England, Great Britain

Friday the 31st of July 1992

11:30 AM

Bella stood in the loo staring at the mirror, trying to find something that looked different about her. She was twelve now and she couldn't see any difference. She was the youngest of her closest friends, meaning she was the last to turn twelve and it was highly annoying.

She might have been a little taller but that only made her look rather awkward. Her hair had grown from the small of her back to her waist but she was sure Sirius would make her cut it again; not considering how much she liked it long. What was even worse was her hair had become even more untamable and it took her 10 minutes alone to brush through it.

"Bella! Are you dressed yet? You've been in there forever!" Sirius yelled from down the hall. Bella sighed and stuck her head out.

"I don't see why you need to rush me! You have your own bathroom for Merlin's sake, Uncle Sirius!" Bella snapped. She gaped in surprise when she saw who was sitting on her bed. Sirius was grinning in the doorway at her.

Ron and Hermione were sitting on her bed; Bella gaped at them before launching herself at them and hugging them tightly.

"Ron! Hermione!" she cried out in surprise, hugging them tightly.

"Happy birthday!" they responded in unison Bella laughed and shot a look at Sirius who smirking at her now.

"I think I deserve an apology. I got your friends here and the Weasleys are here too. Surprise!" Sirius said, making jazz hands. Bella snorted before hugging him tightly.

"First, you're not getting an apology when you forced me into this stupid pureblood dress thing. You're actually supposed to say surprise when we get downstairs but that's all right. Thank you, Uncle Sirius" Bella murmured as Sirius hugged her back just as tightly and tapped her right over her scar.

"Just for you, Doe, and the dress is customary for someone who is Heiress to the Black line to wear. Suck it up and let's go downstairs" Sirius said. Bella glanced in the vanity by the wall and sighed.

The white dress she wore was beautiful and elegant over it she had on a crimson corset with black laces and a darker red tailcoat. It was all right she decided but it didn't mean she had to like it.

"I thought you hated tradition" Bella grumbled Sirius nodded, sagely and Bella looked at him with a look of complete outrage.

"I do but the dress it looks adorable on you" Sirius cooed teasingly and Bella snarled at him before turning away and looking at her friends.

"Bell, it does look nice on you" Hermione reassured her Bella looked at Hermione's face and saw nothing but complete honesty although she could see several traces of amusement. She decided to pick her battles and just sighed.

"Thanks, Mione. I don't think I've met your younger siblings, Ron. Would you introduce me?" Bella asked, trying to bring the subject off herself and the dress. Ron grimaced slightly and Bella looked at him quizzically.

"Er...well...you'll see..." Ron said, looking faintly embarrassed. Hermione and Sirius seemed to know about what he was talking about. They were both snickering under their breaths. When they finally walked down the stairs and into the dining room, she knew why Ron wouldn't say anything.

"Merlin! I'm in Bella Potter's house! I'm touching her stuff...this is bloody amazing!" the redheaded boy sighed. He was holding hands with a girl that could most definitely be his twin who was pretty in her own right.

"Don't go barmy in front of her! She's an amazing Quidditch player and she got on the team in her first year! I think she'll have higher standards than you, Gideon" the girl said. Gideon sneered at his sister and jerked his hand from her.

"You don't know that! Don't be such a prat, Ginny" Gideon snapped. Bella cleared her throat and both children turned to look at her. The effect was instant and had Bella laughing.

"BELLA POTTER!" they shouted together. Ginny's expression was one of awe and admiration. Gideon's expression was one of complete infatuation. This made Bella blush.

"Hi, Gideon and Ginny Weasley" Bella said, smirking. Ginny squealed and started jumping up and down. Gideon paled, considerably.

"She knows our names!" Ginny squealed. Bella snorted again and leaned back.

"I heard you guys were down here...hi, I'm Bella Potter...as you seem to know that already" Bella said, extending her hand. Ginny pushed Gideon aside and shook it, readily as she grinned up at Bella.

"Hi, I'm Ginny! You're biggest, biggest, BIGGEST fan!" Ginny said. Fred and George were snickering by the wall and Mrs. Weasley was sitting down near the front of the table, looking half cross and half amused. A redheaded man who was balding looked highly amused at the situation. Bella assumed that it was Mr. Weasley.

"She'll be wanting your autograph!" Fred called.

"She seriously is your biggest fan. For Halloween she dressed up like you" Ron said, with a grin. Bella stared at the girl in shock. Said girl blushed deep red and looked away pointedly while everyone else laughed.

"Really? Did she have the lightning bolt?" Hermione asked. Ron nodded, laughing loudly now. Gideon was patting his sister on the shoulder, comfortingly. Everyone was laughing except for Bella, Gideon, and Ginny.

"Yep right in the center of her forehead!" George answered. The laughing got louder. Bella glared at them as they stared at her in shock.

"It's not funny!" she snapped, annoyed. She turned back to the shocked younger set of twins.

"It's not funny...Ginny, the scar is a little off-center. But I'm immensely flattered. It's nice to know that I'm idolized by someone" Bella said, smiling kindly. She didn't notice how everyone was looking over her shoulder or how the flames in the fireplace turned emerald. She was surprised as Gideon swept into a low bow and kissed her knuckles. Sirius was snickering even more but she was confused that it wasn't directed at her or Gideon.

"I am Gideon Weasley, Lady Black" Gideon said, sounding overly formal. Bella smirked and she mock-curtsied. Her head suddenly flew forward. She gaped and spun around. She stared wide-eyed with the other kids at the man standing behind her.

"She's not a lady yet but if you must that's Lady Slytherin to you, Mr. Weasley. And don't get a big head over that one, brat. Or any bigger I might say."

"Shut up, Marvolo!" Bella snapped. Tom Riddle smirked down at her and raised an eyebrow. She glared at him with her hands on her hips.

"Brat. Crimson?" he questioned with a smirk. Bella looked away, pointedly with pursed lips.

"I happen to like crimson. My aura is crimson" Bella snapped before turning to the snickering crowd. She crossed her arms.

"Whose idea was it to invite this thing?" Bella demanded while pointing at Tom however just looked rather amused and he leaned on the wall near the fireplace. Sirius raised his hand and she looked at him in shock.

"Guilty as charged Bella He does have a right to be here seeing as he's the Heir of Slytherin and your magical guardian, he should be here for your birthday" Sirius said, smirking as Bella shook her head in disgust.

"Can we just eat breakfast? Merlin! I'm hungry and Kreacher wouldn't let me eat" Bella said. Tom froze at the name and turned to see an elderly house-elf enter the room. The house elf's eyes landed on him and narrowed in recognition but said nothing.

"Fine, fine. Sit down so we can eat" Sirius sighed. He sat at the head of the table and Bella sat at the other head. Ron sat to her left as Gideon had tried to score the seat on her right but Hermione beat him to that seat. That left Gideon next to Hermione and Ginny next to Gideon. Fred and George sat next to Ron. Mr. and Mrs. Weasley sat across from each other and on each of Sirius' sides. Tom didn't even bother he set down a tiny parcel in front of her and rapped it once with his wand. It enlarged and Bella stared at it in surprise.

"I expect you to have read the book by the time you get your next detention...meaning the day after you arrive back at Hogwarts" Tom smirked as he took long strides towards the fireplace as Bella opened the parcel carefully. A sharp gasp escaped her lips.

"Elven texts? Is this a tome on parselmagic? And what's this?" Bella murmured, running her hand over the ancient texts and scrolls. There were at least four scrolls on Elven culture and a large tome on parselmagic. The last was an unmarked and nondescript leather bound book. In the corner on the bottom there seemed to be initials but they disappeared as soon as Bella tried to get a closer look at it.

Tom hid his smirk well.

"Yes to the first question. It's not only a tome on parselmagic. It had almost a complete set of Salazar's notes in it. And that...that's just a

notebook to take notes in. I'm aware that your old one is used for other things. Happy birthday, brat" he said before walking briskly towards the emerald flames. Bella ran her hand over the books while Hermione was practically salivating over them.

"Marvolo? How old are they?" she asked distractedly as he stopped in his stride and turned to look at her.

"Absolutely ancient the tome is about Slytherin's age. The scrolls are even older and come from the hidden books under the Library of Alexandria. I've made them waterproof and as resistant as possible. Have fun making sense of what it says" Tom said, almost cheerfully but definitely smugly as he slipped into the emerald flames and declared his destination under his breath.

Hermione ran her hand over the Parseltongue tome and she breathed deeply as if she had just had a huge relief. Everyone looked at Bella in surprise. She was sighing in content every time she touched the plain black book.

"Bella, this is amazing! You have to translate it for me. It might have amazing battle strategies. I know that Rowena Ravenclaw was said to be an amazing strategist" Hermione said, reverently. She got strange looked but Bella was used to it by now.

"Yes, well, Salazar was the battle tactician. I'll have to give you some of the translations. Yes...but the other scrolls...he must have paid an arm and a leg for these. Unless he found them in the vault. They're absolutely beautiful" Bella murmured. Ron looked at her strangely.

"Since when were you into books? I thought Hermione was the bookworm" Sirius said. Bella looked at her uncle with a defensive look on her face.

"I like to read on certain subjects. What do you think I do when I get detentions with Marvolo? He has an amazing library" Bella said, defensively as Sirius just held up his hands and laughed at her while she was frowning.

"Whoa Bella...no need to go on defense! Let's eat before we wish the birthday girl a happy birthday" Sirius said. With these words, food appeared along the entire long table and soon everybody was

enjoying themselves. Bella had asked creature to move the books to the study off the library.

"Who's Marvolo? It's such a funny little name" Ginny said, giggling by just saying his name. Bella smirked at her and tilted her head.

"Don't let him hear you say that. You'll know him as Professor Riddle. He's the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher. He's a great teacher but he's rather mean to me and he calls me brat so I call him Marvolo. Usually, only in Parseltongue but well..." Bella trailed off. Gideon and Ginny's eyes widened together and Bella laughed, under her breath.

"You're a Parseltongue? Ron told me that all Parselmouths are evil" Gideon said, almost accusingly and Ron flushed. Hermione shook her head.

"Salazar Slytherin wasn't evil. He just had a different way of looking at things, To you what he did and what he believed may have seemed evil, however to the people who also believed in what he said, he was trying to incorporate systems that he thought would work better. He was working for... the lack of a better phrase, the greater good" Hermione explained and Gideon frowned.

"But what does that have to do with being evil and a Parselmouth?" he asked, confused. Bella winked at him and pink spread on his cheeks.

"That's the point. What does it have to do with being evil? I'm not evil. And I speak Parseltongue rather openly. It only seems unnatural to those who cannot speak it. It's like you speak English and someone else may speak French. It's the same thing but I can communicate with a different species entirely" Bella added on. Hermione nodded in agreement.

"But I think it's unnatural that you can speak to another species. I mean their only snakes. Snakes are evil omens" Ron said, rather thickly. Bella hissed at him and the room got quieter.

"If Nagini heard you...she does understand English you know. Snakes are not any less intelligent than humans in reality they're much more observant. I don't appreciate you calling them evil. You do know that I'm more or less part snake, right? Have you not

noticed that when my eyes go red that they become silted? I speak the language as well. I'm incredibly insulted by your lack of tact" Bella said, rather passionately. There was snorts and snickers through the entire table. Mrs. Weasley was glaring at Ron in annoyance.

"Ron! You should watch you say I'm sorry, dear. Now, what do you mean, your eyes go red? They become bloodshot? I believe I can find something in a book to correct that problem" Mrs. Weasley asked, kindly. Fred and George grinned viciously.

"No, Mum. They really go red like all red" Fred said, enthusiastically. Mrs. Weasley's eyes widened. George nodded in agreement.

"They are wicked scary! In her first Quidditch game, she almost fell off her broom because Quirrell threw a Dark curse at it!" George said before pausing for suspense. All that weren't there drew a sharp breath. Bella had never gone into detail of what happened during that Quidditch match.

"And then, Hermione set the end of Snape's robes on fire and broke Quirrell's concentration!" Ron added. Everyone's eyes turned to the bushy haired girl. She blushed and looked away.

"Well...I supposed I did but I didn't save her!" objected Hermione. Gideon and Ginny leaned forward.

"What did you do next?" Gideon asked Bella excitedly.

"Did you use super cool powers that you used to defeat Grindelwald?" Ginny asked, just as interested and captivated by the story. Bella gave a nervous laugh.

"No, no. I don't have any cool superpowers. I'm just a regular witch. It was..." Bella said. Fred and George apparently didn't want the story to end so they leaned forward and interrupted.

"Then...she was dangling and her fingers were slipping. We were circling underneath her to catch her when suddenly there was high pitched hiss. Her eyes went red and then she shot up onto her broom and took off towards the teacher's stand. She said something before going into a spectacular dive and caught the Snitch!" Fred ended. George nodded in enthusiasm before casting Bella a sly look.

"In her mouth...she was almost sick right there on the pitch" he laughed. Bella flushed lightly. She looked away before sighing.

"At least, we won..."

Leaky Cauldron, London, England

Wednesday the 19th of August 1992

10:00 AM

Bella and Sirius walked through the pub, ignoring the murmurs. Bella's head was held up high. Her long black hair was pulled up in a ponytail on the very top of her head. She wore dark blue robes that were almost black in color. Her bangs were down to cover her scar but everyone was now familiar with what she looked like. The pair stopped in front of the renowned Hogwarts professor.

"Riddle."

"Black."

"Marvolo."

"Brat."

Those were the meeting words that had the entire party scowling. The pub got louder as they went into the back to open the gateway to Diagon Alley. Tom opened the doorway and they walked into the always amazing Alley.

"I don't want to go to the Alley with you" Bella said, bluntly as soon as they stepped foot into the crowded and bright Alley. Tom glanced at her out of the corner of his eyes.

"I'm not enjoying the fact that I have to take time out of my day either. But why are you so angry? Don't you enjoy annoying me?" Tom asked, curiously. Bella nodded, enthusiasm shining through her at this point.

"I do. But...those were the most ridiculous books you put on the booklist!" Bella snapped in anger. She thrust a piece of parchment

at Tom and he pushed it back, already knowing the contents. Bella examined the parchment once more.

The Standard Book of Spells, Grade 2 by Miranda Goshawk

Break with a Banshee by Gilderoy Lockhart

Gadding with Ghouls by Gilderoy Lockhart

Holidays with Hags by Gilderoy Lockhart

Travels with Trolls by Gilderoy Lockhart

Voyages with Vampires by Gilderoy Lockhart

Wanderings with Werewolves by Gilderoy Lockhart

Year with the Yeti by Gilderoy Lockhart

"I didn't put them on there don't worry you'll find out soon enough" Tom snapped. Bella sighed and nodded. They continued to walk down the road, intent on getting to Gringotts.

"I don't like this at all I've heard about those books. Complete rubbish if you ask me" Sirius said with disgust on his face. Bella nodded in agreement and shook her head as she thought about.

"Absolutely stupid, I agree I'll look over the books anyway" Bella decided. Sirius shrugged and they made it to Gringotts and Bella gasped in surprise to see Hermione and two people that she assumed were her parents standing there, looking around in excitement. Hermione smiled brightly.

"Bella!" she cried out, enthusiastically. Bella and Hermione hugged before Hermione all but dragged the girl to her parents.

"Mum, Dad, this is Bella Potter. She's the Girl-Who-Lived. I went to her birthday party" Hermione clarified. The two looked at her in surprise before smiling.

"Hello, I'm Dr. Granger but just call me Mrs. Granger. It'll be much easier to distinguish who you're speaking with" Hermione's mum

said kindly. She stuck out her hand and Bella took it before shaking it.

"Hello, I'm Sirius Black, Bella's guardian. I met you when I came to collect Hermione" Sirius said. Dr. Granger and Mrs. Granger nodded in recognition before turning to Tom who had been standing there, inspecting his nails and cleaning them on his robes.

"Oh...Professor Riddle? Mum, Dad, this is Professor Riddle" Hermione said, surprised that she hadn't noticed him there. Tom looked up and swooped down and kissed Mrs. Granger's hand before shaking Dr. Granger's. Dr. Granger looked slightly offended but Tom's face held the smallest hint of a smug smile. Bella rolled her eyes and sighed.

"Hello, I'm the Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher and the Deputy Headmaster of Hogwarts" Tom said, eloquently. They nodded in understanding and Dr. Granger pulled out a stack of ten-pound notes.

"We should go in and exchange this..." Dr. Granger trailed off, awkwardly while Tom nodded and looked over at Bella.

"Brat, be proper and greet the goblins properly" Tom snapped. Hermione's parents gaped at his treatment of her. Sirius smirked, knowing he only meant it in jest, even if Bella didn't realize it. Hermione was snickering. Bella only scowled.

"Well aware of this, Marvolo" she snapped before throwing her head back and adopting the attitude of a pureblood Heiress. She walked into the bank with a sense of purpose and the Granger parents observed her. She approached the teller box and looked up at the teller box.

"Merry meet, Bogrod" she said, giving a low curtsy. Bogrod examined the girl in front of them. Hermione watched with a growing smirk.

"Merry meet, Lady Slytherin."

"Merry meet, Bogrod" Tom said, greeting the goblin. The goblin's eyes widened and Tom gave him a warning look.

"Merry meet, Lord Slytherin."

This got some reactions from the Grangers but mostly confusion. Hermione leaned over and explained that Tom was her magical guardian and what I meant and such. They soon understood.

"Which vault, Lord?" Bogrod asked. Tom tilted his head before giving a grim smile.

"Vault 1069" Tom answered. Bogrod's eyes widened and he tilted his head.

"The library?" he asked. Bella's eyes widened as Tom nodded.

"Miss Granger, would you like to come along? I'm afraid it only fits four people, however. Would this be alright with you, Dr. Granger, Mrs. Granger?" Tom asked. Hermione turned to her parents.

"Please, please, please Mum! They have books from the Library of Alexandria! Please?" Hermione begged. Mrs. Granger's eyes widened.

"Really? The Library of Alexandria? That's fascinating " Dr. Granger asked, almost disbelievingly as Tom merely nodded his head.

"There was a hidden room that was fire resistant; a spell was cast over it I believe. It had the entire library copied there. Salazar Slytherin got his fair share...or more than fair, I suppose. He acquired half of it. The other half is scattered through the wizarding world, some to old families, and some are in the Department of Mysteries" Tom explained. The Grangers didn't quite know what the Department of Mysteries was but they nodded anyway.

"We must depart. It is a long ride down there."

Flourish & Blotts, Diagon Alley, London, England

Wednesday the 19th of August 1992

12:30 PM

The Weasleys, who had met up with them after they explored the vaults, group all made their way into the already crowded Flourish & Blotts. Ron groaned in annoyance.

"Why are there so many people here?" he moaned. Hermione pointed at the sign and made a huge squeal. Bella looked at the girl in alarm.

"Gilderoy Lockhart will be here! He's signing copies of his new book, Magical Me! I read it and it was absolutely inspiring" she sighed, looking completely awestruck and in addition to that, lovestruck. Bella made a noise of disgust in the back of her throat that most of the men echoed.

"We'll be able to see him in a minute..." Mrs. Weasley said, sounding rather excited. She was patting down her hair and Bella rolled her eyes. Hermione looked just as excited and it seemed like Bella was alone there. Even Ginny looked excited.

"This is ridiculous..." Bella murmured to Gideon who was standing closest to her. Gideon nodded in agreement, though he'd probably agree with the girl about everything.

Before Gideon could properly respond, Gilderoy Lockhart came into view. He had shoulder length gold hair that was in impossible curls and he looked like he spends hours doing it every morning. Bella could see why some women would consider him handsome. He was tanned and had a bright smile and eyes the shade of forget-me-not that matched his robes. But she didn't personally feel attracted to him.

"Out of the way, there! This is for the Prophet" an irritable little man snarled. He was taking pictures. About a dozen by the minute if Bella judged correctly. Ron moved out of the man's way and shot him a scathing look.

"Big deal! Lockhart's not that great anyway" Ron spat. Apparently, Lockhart heard him and looked up.

"It can't be...Bella Potter?" Lockhart shouted, shooting her a smile. She lifted one eyebrow and put one hand on her hip. The crowd parted and someone pushed her forward. She turned on the person and sneered.

"Don't push me!" she hissed before looking up at the flamboyant man in front of her with her head held high. She extended a graceful hand to Lockhart with an appraising and cold look that she had learned from Walburga. The woman in the portrait had taken a liking to her. Lockhart's big grin faltered for a split second before shaking her hand vigorously.

The entire shop burst into applause and Bella was pulled next to him as the Prophet photographer took photo after photo of the two. Lockhart threw his arm around her.

"Big smile, Bella. Together, you and I are worth the front page" Lockhart hissed through his unnaturally white teeth. Bella gave a pained smile and she looked for a familiar face.

She found one with her a smug smile and an amused expression. This had her instantly scowling and Lockhart jostled her again and she regained her pained and forced smile.

"Ladies and gentlemen! What an extraordinary moment this is! Two of the most famous people in the wizarding world happen to be in Flourish & Blotts at the same time. It's such an amazing moment that I think I make an equally amazing announcement" Lockhart said. Tom's smile slipped off and his eyes narrowed. Lockhart hadn't seen him yet but if he had...he would've dropped dead at the venomous glare.

"When young Bella here stepped into Flourish & Blotts today, she only wanted to buy my autobiography. However, she won't have to buy it. She will get a regular edition and a first edition, signed by me! In fact, she'll get two whole sets of my books—" Lockhart continued as he dumped the books into her arms. Bella staggered under the weight. The entire shop burst into applause.

"She had no idea that she would be getting much, much more than my well-written and beautifully crafted books. She and her schoolmates will be, in fact, getting the real magical me. I have great pleasure and pride in announcing that this September, I will be assuming the newly invented post, which was invented just for me, of the assistant Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry" Lockhart announced. Cheers

erupted through the entire shop. Bella froze and her eyes locked with Tom's. They were accusatory as her words.

"Why in the bloody hell are you letting this prat teach in your classroom?" she snapped. Tom looked at her and his left eyes twitched. Lockhart seemed to suddenly realize that Tom was there and flinched at his vicious glare. Tom's hand shot out and pulled Bella out of the massive crowd.

"Are you serious? The guy is a fraud!" Sirius protested. He held half of Bella's books. Bella sighed and shook her head before taking the books from Sirius who didn't seem to realize while he was ranting to the Grangers, Mr. and Mrs. Weasley and Tom. She walked towards the side where Gideon and Ginny were talking. Bella dumped one set of books into Ginny's cauldron and another set in Gideon's. They looked at her wide-eyed.

"You have these. I'll buy my own..." she said, quietly.

"Bet you loved that, didn't you, Potter?" a voice said. Bella didn't even have to turn to recognize the patronizing tone. She turned away to confront the platinum haired Draco Malfoy.

"Famous Bella Potter, Can't even go into a bookshop without being on the front page. You're just starved for attention aren't you?" Malfoy sneered. Bella rolled her eyes and couldn't respond when suddenly Gideon pushed forward with Ginny.

"Leave her alone!" Gideon snapped.

"Yeah, she didn't want all that!" Ginny agreed. Malfoy smirked.

"Potter, you've got yourself a little knight in shining armor and a lady-in-waiting. Aren't you the little princess?" Malfoy hissed. Gideon and Ginny flushed a bright red. Bella sneered back at him and lifted her head higher.

"No but I am your lady. Maybe it's time you show some respect" Bella drawled. Malfoy glared at her.

"Oh, it's you bet you're surprised Bella's here?" Ron asked, his voice straining to sound pleasant. Malfoy however held no such pretenses. He looked at Ron as if he were the street he walked on.

"No. But I'm surprised that you are. I suppose your parents will go hungry for a month to pay for all those" Malfoy snapped, irritably. Ron turned red and started forward when Hermione grabbed the back of his jacket and pulled him back. Her inhumane strength showed again for a girl about a head shorter than the soon to be second year.

"Ron! We're going to leave now? Come on, let's go outside" Mr. Weasley said, fighting his way over.

"Well, well, well If it isn't Arthur Weasley."

The drawl was remarkably similar to Draco's and Bella looked up to see a carbon copy of the boy. He was taller and older and he had longer hair but that was as far as the differences went. Wait, no, she noticed. The older man's eyes went icy blue in the light, it seemed.

"Lucius" Mr. Weasley said, coolly.

"Busy time at the Ministry, it seems. All those raids...I hope they're paying you overtime" Mr. Malfoy said. His eyes connected with crimson ones for a split second before his hand dipped into Gideon's cauldron and pulled out an old and battered copy of A Beginner's Guide To Transfiguration. He looked at it with disdain.

"Obviously not. Dear me, what's the use of being a disgrace for a wizard if you aren't even paid well for the humiliation of it?" he said. His voice was aristocratic and lilting. He didn't seem concerned at all but there was a malicious undertone there.

Mr. Weasley flushed darker than his three other children.

"We must have very different ideas what disgraces a wizard, Malfoy" he said.

"Clearly. The company you keep...your status as a disgraced wizard may be raised by the fact that you're sorry excuse for a son is friends with Lady Slytherin, but it seems that the Mudblood...you family could sink no longer, it seems" Malfoy said. It wasn't Mr. Weasley who launched himself at Malfoy. It was Ron Malfoy easily threw him off and Mr. Weasley attacked him too. He knocked the

other man backwards into a bookshelf and books came tumbling down.

Hermione stood frozen, looking down with wide eyes but a vicious smile spreading on her face.

"Break it up! Arthur, this ends now!" Sirius said. He grabbed the red headed man and pulled him off of Mr. Malfoy. Mr. Malfoy straightened and patted his hair back down. He was still holding her book and Bella thought she saw a flash of gold but she couldn't be sure. Mr. Malfoy dropped the book back into Gideon's cauldron.

"Take it boy. It seems that your father isn't worth looking up to if he resorts to Muggle dueling. He's a disgrace, just like the rest of your blood traitor family" Mr. Malfoy hissed before leaving the shop, Draco and another boy trailing after him. Hermione stiffened when her eyes fell on the other boy before she relaxed.

Bella looked at her friend strangely before exiting.

Platform 9 $\frac{3}{4}$, King's Cross, London, England, Great Britain

Tuesday the 1st of September 1992

10:45 AM

Hermione Granger sat on the train, waving to her parents she knew Ron and his family would be coming through the barrier at the last possible minute. Bella and Sirius would be running in at the last possible second. According to Bella, Sirius loved to be late especially when it had something to do with her.

"Ciao, bella ragazza."

The face made Hermione look up and she saw the same boy from before. It was the same boy who had been with both Malfoys. She really looked at him and couldn't help the blush that spread on her cheeks.

His skin was tanned and he had silky dark hair that fell elegantly to his shoulders. The way he held himself told her that he was a pureblood. This didn't make her stomach feel any better.

"Oh...er, my name's not Bella. That's Bella Potter. I'm just her Muggleborn friend" Hermione said in one of her rare and finest moments of ineptitude. The boy in front of her laughed.

"I know who the proclaimed Girl-Who-lived is, bella ragazza" he said, again. Hermione's eyes widened at his thick Mediterranean accent in his voice. Hermione cleared her throat, awkwardly.

"Er...right. Um...what are you doing here?" Hermione asked, slowly. The boy tilted his head and gestured to his trunk.

"I was looking for a compartment. It seems I haven't found one yet, judging from my trunk still being in my possession. Sì?" the boy asked. Hermione's cheeks turned pink and she looked away.

"Well, this compartment's taken. I'm waiting for my friends" Hermione said. The boy nodded in agreement and took a step back.

"Well, I will leave you to wait. Arrivederci, bella ragazza."

Hermione's flushed deepened as he bowed to her before leaving. And that is how her friends found her.

"Hermione, why are you blushing?"

"Shut up, Bella" was Hermione's response before blushing even harder.

...

A/N: Well, well, well. We are starting Book 2 and it's starting much more differently than Chamber of Secrets. Have any of you figured out what the creature is that knows all but knows nothing? Well...it doesn't matter if you have because you won't be meeting that creature for only God knows how long.

Chapter X

Hogwarts Platform, Hogsmeade, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Tuesday the 1st of September 1992

7:45 PM

Hermione watched as Bella read one of the scrolls she had gotten from Professor Riddle. It was known by almost everyone in school that he favored her immensely Hermione noted. Hermione couldn't understand a word that it said, but Bella seemed to. The train was slowly coming to a stop and Bella placed the scroll in a special case in her trunk and muttered a quick warding spell that Sirius had most likely taught her.

She cared so much for the scrolls and books in there that Hermione couldn't help but smile.

"Come on. We don't want to be late to the Sorting" Bella sighed and Hermione and Ron nodded in agreement.

They exited their compartment, abandoning their trunks so that someone on the train could take them to the dorms. Hermione knew that the train was a relatively new way to transport students to the school. The three pushed their way through the thick crowd. Bella was the smallest of the three in stature so she was between them and hooked arms with Hermione.

The girl looked very tired her eyes were dimmer and there were slight circles under her eyes, but it seemed that with every step Bella took, the Girl-Who-Lived looked less worn.

Hermione watched as Bella did a double take when she passed a girl with wide grey eyes and arched eyebrows that made her look permanently surprised. Her robes didn't have a crest so obviously she was a first year.

"What's wrong?" Hermione asked. Bella shook her head but said nothing. Ron, Bella, and Hermione wandered around and followed the sea of older students to a bunch of horseless drawn carriages. The bushy haired girl pointed at them.

"That's how the second years and above get to the castle. I read about it" Hermione said, quietly. Ron snorted and rolled his eyes.

"Hermione, you've read about everything" he commented. Bella snickered as the three piled into the first empty carriage they came upon. They talked about stupid things but Hermione's mind was still on the Italian boy.

She could tell he was Italian. She understood basic words but for the life of her she was still confused on what he had called her. She had made an absolute fool of herself before and she refused to ask him what it meant.

"Bella, does Professor Riddle know Italian?" Hermione asked she knew from Bella that he had traveled the world at one point. Bella looked up from her intense conversation of Quidditch with Ron.

"Maybe...he traveled with his mentor for a time, I think. He might know the language. Why?" Bella asked. Hermione looked away and willed the blush from surfacing on her cheeks.

"I was just curious to know what a few words meant."

"Why? Did someone tell you something in Italian?" Ron asked, trying to get into the conversation. Hermione blushed and looked down. Bella gave her a sly smile and tilted her head.

"I'll ask him for you, tomorrow night" Bella promised. Hermione and Ron gave her a strange look and she looked at them, blankly.

"Tomorrow night?" Ron asked in confusion. Bella smirked and crossed her arms.

"I'm going to get my first detention of the year tomorrow! I bet you by the end of my seven years here, I'll have more than all of the Marauders put together, I bet you three sickles, Hermione that I will without even trying" Bella said, proudly. Ron sniggered, loudly.

"I accept that bet. You get on his nerves intentionally. You're going to be expelled before you even reach seventh year!" Hermione moaned. Bella just didn't know when to stop...

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Tuesday the 1st of September 1992

8:00 PM

Bella watched as Tom led the first years into the Great Hall. She smiled when Gideon and Ginny looked around with wide eyes. Tom shot her a smug smirk and her lips curled at him into a snarl. To everyone else it just looked like he was smirking at his normally did but his lips turned into that small smile. Bella's snarl disappeared and her eyes widened in surprise. She shook her head, sure that it had been her imagination but even she knew her imagination wasn't that wild.

"Did you just see Marvolo...Professor Riddle smile?" Bella hissed to Hermione. Hermione was also watching with an astonished look her face but it was for a completely different reason, it seemed. Her eyes followed the other girl's look and she saw the boy Hermione had been staring at.

The boy looked increasingly familiar.

"He's a Slytherin..." Hermione muttered to herself but Bella heard nonetheless but didn't make a comment on it. If Hermione had wanted to tell her, she would have. Hermione turned the other girl as the Sorting began.

They didn't really listen as the Sorting Hat sang a similar version of what it had sung last year. Bella was glaring at the man who was sitting towards the end of the table. Gilderoy Lockhart was flashing bright grins at everyone that made Bella growl.

"Creevy, Colin."

"GRYFFINDOR!"

Bella's eyes widened when she realized that she had blanked out. Hermione wasn't paying attention either. Ron was whispering to her but she was completely oblivious her eyes were darting from the empty plate and goblet in front of her to the boy at the Slytherin table who was shooting her sly glances.

"Are you okay?" Bella murmured. Ron looked affronted at being interrupted. Hermione blushed at being caught and glanced at Bella with heavy-lidded eyes.

"I'm fine. I'm fine" was Hermione's seemingly reassuring response.

"Lovegood, Luna."

"RAVENCLAW!"

Soon, only the twins were left up front and they looked nervous. Gideon was turning paler and paler as the minutes went by, his freckles standing out on his cheeks. Ginny was shaking and was turning red as the attention was turned from her brother on to her.

"Weasley, Gideon."

Gideon wandered up, his legs shaking and Bella could see Tom roll his eyes. It was obvious that he wasn't the boy's biggest fan.

"GRYFFINDOR!"

The Gryffindors cheered, loudly in excitement and Bella smiled. He wandered over, almost tripping over his robes and sat a little ways down. He was slightly scowling over his smile he had been at first, searching for a seat near Bella.

"Weasley, Ginevra."

Ginny walked up, tiredly and sat down on the chair and put the hat on over her head. As soon as it landed over her head, silence reigned. For a few minutes she sat there, her fingers twitching as she sat there.

The silence reigned and Bella instinctually knew that the Sorting Hat was giving Ginny a choice. The Girl-Who-Lived knew that Gryffindor was one choice but she didn't know the other. Bella held her breath as the wide brim opened up to announce Ginny Weasley's house.

"RAVENCLAW!"

Ginny stood with wide eyes. Ron looked shell shocked as his sister walked towards the table decked with bronze and blue. Hermione clapped, smiling. Gideon was the only Weasley not shocked. He was grinning, proudly. Percy nodded, pompously and began declaring how intelligent his little sister was and such.

"GO GIN!" he shouted, Bella clapped as well as the Ravenclaw table cheered. She watched with bright green eyes as Ginny sat next to the girl with wide grey eyes. Something about her...

"I can't believe Ginny went to Ravenclaw" Ron said in shock he looked slightly disgruntled by that fact and Hermione gave him a stern glare, her attention finally back to her friends.

"Ron, Ravenclaw isn't a bad house at all. I was almost Sorted there" Hermione said, sharply. She was chastising him and Ron didn't like it. He glared at her and then puffed out his chest.

"Well, Bella and I were immediately sorted into Gryffindor! We're the courageous lot" Ron said, proudly. Bella cleared her throat and the two looked at her, curiously.

"Er...no I wasn't. I was almost Sorted into Slytherin" Bella commented. Ron looked at her in shock. She didn't look the least bit ashamed.

"But...but...all Dark wizards come from Slytherin!" Ron protested. Bella gave her a slight grin.

"Ron...I'm Lady Slytherin. Why wouldn't I go to Slytherin?" was her only response.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Tuesday the 1st of September 1992

11:30 PM

Hello, my name is Bella Anastasia Potter.

Hello, Bella Anastasia Potter. My name is Tom.

I know someone named Tom, too.

As do I Your name sounds common, Bella. What are you?

In what way? Blood wise?

That is correct.

I'm a half-blood. Your name sounds ridiculously common as well.

I know.

What's wrong with my name?

Nothing. Nothing at all.

I don't like when people don't tell me things, I might get angry and tear you to shreds.

We have a lot more in common than you think, Bella Potter.

In what way?

IN WHAT WAY?

Tom...answer me.

ANSWER ME!

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 2nd of September 1992

8:00 AM

The next morning, the trio walked into the Great Hall when suddenly, someone caught Bella's arm. Bella spun around, her wand already half out of her robes when she noticed that it was curly-haired Gideon, he was looking at her with bright brown eyes.

"Yes, Gideon?" Bella asked, tiredly.

"Bella! I was wondering if I could sit with you today!" Gideon said, looking at her earnestly. Bella paled and looked around. She already knew that the boy had a massive crush on her.

"Er...well..." Bella started.

"If it isn't Princess Potter and her little knight in shining armor isn't he a little too young for you, Potter?" the drawl came. Bella sneered and jerked her arm away from Gideon and looked at Draco Malfoy in surprise.

"Malfoy, what did I tell you about respecting your betters?" Bella asked, quietly. Draco snorted and rolled his eyes.

"You may be Lady Slytherin but you're still a disgusting half-blood" Draco snapped. Ron turned and red and took a step forward when Hermione pushed him back and took a step forward.

"What was that, you little ponce?" Hermione asked. Their eyes widened. Hermione never said anything derogative to anyone. It was a surprising development.

"Watch who you're talking to, you filthy Mudblood" Draco returned. Bella hissed and her wand was suddenly out and the tip was in his neck. Bella leaned forward and dug the tip of her wand into his jugular.

"Watch it Malfoy" Bella snapped.

"What are you going to do, Princess?" Malfoy baited Bella snarled and took a step forward.

"I'm warning you. I won't hesitate to curse you to hell and back," Bella said, quietly. Draco snorted and rolled his eyes.

"What curse could you, the Golden child of the Light know?" demanded Draco. Bella froze and then shook her head.

"I'm no one's Golden child."

A hissing laugh rang out and Bella's lips widened into a smirk and some of the first years screamed when they saw what was making

the sound. Bella felt the heavy body climb up her and she saw Gideon gasp and almost scream as Draco paled.

"Speaker-child, I haven't seen you in so long!" Nagini said to her. Bella kissed the snake on the head and rubbed her cheek to the snake.

"I know, Nagini. Where is Marvolo?" Bella murmured to the snake. She still didn't remove her wand and didn't notice how Malfoy was inching away, slowly. Hermione's eyes were narrowing.

"In there" Nagini said, flicking her tongue towards the Great Hall. Suddenly, Bella looked back up as there was a flash of movement. Malfoy had tried to run away but Ron had lunged at him.

"No! Ron..." Bella snapped. Hermione grabbed him by the back of his robes and glared at Malfoy.

"You give purebloods a bad name...Thanatos" Hermione murmured, her eyes black, before turning on her heel and storming away. Draco growled and glared back at her, his silvery eyes turning into the color of molten steel.

"Drop dead" he snapped before walking away, with his head thrown back. Hermione blinked, her eyes going brown. Ron hadn't heard her, obviously. He was still fuming over the Mudblood comment.

"Do you even know what he called you?" Ron fumed. Hermione rolled her eyes.

"Yes, it means I have dirty blood. Well I'm a Mudblood and damn proud of it. Ron, it's over" Hermione sighed before walking into the Great Hall.

Ron was left standing in the doorway with Gideon.

"Why are you so angry?" Gideon asked, quietly. Ron growled and shoved past his little brother without another word.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 2nd of September 1992

9:05 AM

Bella walked to the greenhouses with her two best friends. They had Herbology first with the Hufflepuffs. Professor Sprout stood in the front of the greenhouse near the head of the long wooden table. Twenty different colored earmuffs rested on the bench behind Professor Sprout. Bella grabbed a pair of green ones before hooking them around her neck.

After all the students gathered Professor Sprout announced what was on the agenda for the day. "We'll be repotting Mandrakes today, can anyone tell me what the properties of Mandrakes are?"

Hermione's hand was in the air before anyone could even blink.

"Mandrake, or Mandragora, is a powerful restorative. It is used to return people who have been transfigured or cursed to their original state" Hermione quoted.

"Excellent. Ten points to Gryffindor. The Mandrake forms an essential part of most antidotes. However, it is also very dangerous. Who can tell me why?" Sprout said.

Hermione's hand shot up once again. She had smacked Ron in her enthusiasm and he scowled, viciously, at her.

"The cry of the Mandrake is fatal to anyone who hears it."

"Precisely. Take another ten points. Now the Mandrakes we have are very young so they will only knock you out. So everyone put your earmuffs on chop." Sprout commanded. Everyone snapped them on and she gestured for them to stand in front of the rows and rows of purplish green plants.

Sprout snatched at one of the plants with the weird leaves and pulled it up and Bella gasped in disgust. A small, ugly, muddy baby was attached to the leaves, and had pale green skin that made her want to vomit.

Sprout took a large pot with a lot of soil and buried the nasty looking baby in the dirt so that only the leaves were visible again and the crying had stopped. Sprout nodded and glanced around.

"Four to a tray" she said. The trio was joined by a Hufflepuff boy that Bella had seen around but never had spoken to.

"Justin Finch-Fletchley I know who you are, of course, the famous Bella Potter, and you're Hermione Granger you're always on top of every class we've got, and you're Ron Weasley, Bella and Hermione's friend" he said, smiling brightly. Ron scowled at that.

He didn't like being referred to as that, obviously.

"That Lockhart's something, isn't he? Awfully brave chap. Have you read his books? I'd have died of fear if I'd been cornered in a telephone booth by a werewolf, but he stayed cool and he just...he was fantastic" Justin started. Bella suddenly scowled and shook her head.

"Lockhart absolutely disgusts me. He's a fraud. " Bella said. Justin looked at her patiently.

"A lot of people don't think you defeated Grindelwald. Some would say you're a fraud" Justin said, quietly. Bella hissed and turned on him, her eyes rolling to stare at him. Justin flinched at the intensity of her glare.

"I don't know what happened that night. I barely remember anything, but I do know that I'm not a fraud. Grindelwald was defeated that night. But I don't think it was by me."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 2nd of September 1992

1:00 PM

Bella sat in the front row, petting Nagini's head, slowly. The girl population minus Bella was buzzing about Gilderoy Lockhart. Bella sighed and the door opened in the back. Everyone turned to look to see if it was the 'revered' Lockhart.

It wasn't but the girl's didn't have to sigh in disappointment.

Tom stormed in, his eyes bright crimson he looked absolutely annoyed. Bella could tell by the tautness of his neck and how set his jaw was. He went up to her desk, and looked down at her. She looked up and he lowered down until he was centimeters away from her face.

"Brat, he's going to try and corner you later today. Nagini...don't let the brat out of your sight" Tom commanded. Bella nodded and her eyes wide as he walked around and stood behind his desk and slammed his hand down. Everyone stopped at abrupt sound of the loud noise.

"Hello, hello, hello!" Lockhart said, sweeping into the room. He was obviously gay, Bella noted. Lockhart threw a glowing smile around the room before his eyes rested on Tom. Tom actually cringed and his burned a deeper crimson. Nagini and Bella hissed at the man and Bella's eyes widened when she realized she had. The man hadn't heard but Hermione had.

Lockhart crossed to Neville's and he picked up and pointed at the picture. It was a winking Lockhart. Lockhart winked at Tom and Bella growled once again. Nagini's hiss was more audible and Lockhart looked up with wide eyes. Bella stroked the python, menacingly. Lockhart's grin never faltered.

"I'm Gilderoy Lockhart, Order of Merlin, Third Class, Honorary Member of the Dark Force Defense League, and five time of Witch Weekly's Most-Charming-Smile Award. However I don't talk about that, I didn't get rid of the Bandon Banshee by smiling at her" Lockhart said. Bella couldn't resist.

"Yeah...because you didn't get rid of her,You're a fraud" Bella snarled. Lockhart heard her and scowled before looking away, replacing the scowl with a small smile, much smaller than his blinding and unnatural grin.

"Well, Miss Potter, I know it may seem hard to believe but even Professor Riddle can vouch for me" Lockhart said. Tom's lips turned into a smirk.

"I must agree with Miss Potter, Lockhart. Proceed on with the class" Tom said, plainly. Lockhart looked slightly crestfallen before turning

back to the class. Hermione's expression was skeptical now and Bella grinned. Her friend thought he was a fraud too.

"I think we'll start with a quiz about myself..." Lockhart said. Bella groaned and Tom growled under his breath.

"Lockhart, that's enough. Teach something useful about Defense. Mister Longbottom could teach better than you" Tom snapped and Neville blushed. Bella rolled her eyes at Tom's annoyance. He knew that Lockhart was trying to flirt with him in the middle of the class. Hermione and Bella shared a look and Hermione raised her hand slowly.

"Yes? What is your name?" Lockhart asked. Hermione smiled, sweetly.

"Hermione Granger, resident Mudblood" Hermione started, smiling. Bella snorted and cackled under her breath. The other people in the class gasped and Ron stared at her in utter disbelief. Tom's smirk was widening and his eyes were back to charcoal now. He was completely amused.

"Er...right. Miss Granger, do you have a question about magical me?" Lockhart asked, confused as to why she was referring to herself in such a derogatory way.

"No. I know that you're a magical being. As I was saying, I'd just like to point out that Professor Riddle isn't gay" Hermione said. Lockhart's eyes widened and his smile really did slip off. Bella was outright cackling now. Everyone stared at her in shock before she flashed Tom a mischievous smile.

"That's the truth, Professor Lockhart! He's downright asexual" she cackled. Tom's smirk disappeared and turned into a sneer and he crossed over to her and smacked her in the back of her head. Lockhart's eyes widened and Bella scowled.

"Really? You're doing this again?" she snarled. Tom leaned down and glared at her though his eyes were glinting with amusement.

"Detention. 8:30" he hissed and Bella gave him an innocent look.

"Not the usually 8:00 sharp? You're getting soft" she said, smiling. Tom looked close to throttling her and Hermione groaned she hadn't meant to start this.

"You insufferable brat...ten points from Gryffindor" he snapped. Bella was still smiling just as sweetly despite the fact that everyone else was glaring at her. Bella turned around and kissed Nagini's head. Nagini took it as a cue and hissed at the other Gryffindors.

"Okay, Professor Riddle. Mione you owe me three sickles. I didn't even have to try" Bella smirked Lockhart looked at a loss for words. Tom stormed away and sat behind his desk before he began to grade the essays from summer homework.

"So, down to business, Now—be warned! It is my job to arm you against the foulest creatures, know to wizard kind..." Lockhart said. Bella raised her hand and pointed at Tom.

"Actually, that's his job. You're just the assistant" she said, bored. Lockhart pointedly ignored the girl who was shaking with silent laughter.

"You may find yourself facing your worst fears in this room. Know that no harm can befall you whilst I'm here. All I ask you is that you remain calm" Lockhart said, quietly He crossed the room to fetch a covered cage. He placed it on the table it on Tom's desk. Tom looked up in alarm as half the cage was covering the parchments he was working on. He sighed and crossed his arms, his eye beginning to twitch.

"I must ask you not to scream. It might provoke them" Lockhart said, in a low voice. Nagini's tongue flicked out to taste the air. Bella watched in anticipation she couldn't help but be a little interested in what Lockhart had to show them.

He yanked back the canvas covering and Bella began to cackle, manically. Almost the entire class was laughing with her.

"Yes! Freshly-caught Cornish pixies it is normal that you have to dilute your fear with laughter" Lockhart said, completely confused. Seamus snorted even louder and Lockhart smiled at him.

"Yes?" he asked.

"Professor Riddle never brings in creatures and they aren't really Dark creatures are they?" Seamus asked. Lockhart didn't have a chance to answer. Bella turned to face Seamus.

"I know a Dark creature when I see one. That's not one of them" Bella said. Seamus looked at her, skeptically.

"How would you know?" he asked, curiously. Bella froze and Ron snorted, coming to her rescue.

"Do they look dangerous, Seamus?" Ron asked. Seamus shrugged and they turned back to Lockhart.

"Don't be so sure they are devilish tricky little blighters they can be!" Lockhart said, wagging a finger at Seamus, Ron, and Hermione snickered under her breath when suddenly Lockhart opened the cage. Tom had darted forward to close it when all of them came out like little blue fireballs.

With that the chaos started. Bella however was leaning back in her chair and cackling loudly. The chaos was beautiful. In a few seconds the little buggers had Neville hanging from the chandelier. Windows were smashed and Tom looked absolutely livid.

"Peskipiksi Pesternomi!" Lockhart shouted, pointing his wand. Hermione groaned and shook her head.

"That's not even a real spell!" she complained meanwhile Tom stood up, shaking his eyes were crimson in color and his wand was in hand. He waved it intricately and snarled.

"STOP!" he let out in a large hiss and a calm rushed over the room as his magic was released from his wand and Bella leaned back and began to tremble. The pixies froze in midair.

Bella eyes rolled back into her head and she began to seizure. Tom stowed his wand away as Hermione screamed and looked at Bella with wide eyes. As soon as it was away, Bella let out a soundless scream and gasped for air, her green eyes burning. She looked pale and she was gripping her wand. Everyone watched as she closed her eyes and shook her head. Nagini looked at her charge, worriedly.

"So...Dark...so Dark...so delicious. So...evil" Bella hissed, sounding completely possessed. Her voice was low enough so that the only people that could hear her were Lockhart, Ron, Hermione, and Tom. Tom's eyes widened and turned away.

"Get her to the Hospital Wing for extensive magical exposure to an adult core. She fed on my magic. Granger, Weasley take her, now" Tom said, calmly. Hermione wrapped her arm around Bella's trembling shoulders. Bella looked absolutely insane and she pushed Hermione off her.

"Don't touch me, Mórrígan!" she hissed. She stormed off, her hair wild and Hermione's eyes widened at the name. Draco also looked stricken just as the Italian boy did.

"Mórrígan?" Hermione whispered. Bella's wand was out and she walking, quickly. Hermione ran out of the classroom as fast as she could. Bella was running faster and she glanced behind with a quirk of a smile. Ron was right behind Hermione.

"Keep up, Hermione!" Bella cackled Ron looked with wide eyes as Bella went crazy. The pair chased the Potter girl up the steps. Teachers shouted at them to stop. They almost ran over Professor Flitwick.

"Sorry, Professor! This is a bit of an emergency! Bella's gone crazy! Call the Headmaster!" Hermione shouted over her shoulder. Bella suddenly stopped at the seventh floor and ran past a blank wall. There wasn't anything there.

"Work, work, work! Please! I need it. I require it!" Bella shouted. Nothing appeared. Bella backed up against the wall as Hermione and Ron appeared. And from the other side of the corridor, so did Dumbledore.

"My dear girl, what is wrong?" asked Dumbledore. Bella glared at him with hardened eyes and Hermione gasped. One was crimson and the other green. Bella cackled and smirked at him.

"You've lost old man. And you're about to lose...everything."

And then Bella's world went black.

....

A/N: Hola. I was wondering if you guys would mind if I change the title. I was wondering if I should. The title is 'Once Upon A December'. Could you guys vote on it for me? I don't know if I should and it's seriously bothering me. If you have a different suggestion pick other and PM me with what you've got to say. Is that okay with you guys?

Oh, before I forget, review responses!

Xoxo: Hi! You seem to fear that Bella's not awesome enough. She grows into her awesomeness. Plus, you're forgetting that she's 12. She'll definitely grow into her awesomeness. I promise. Hermione is pretty awesome and I need her to be. But soon you're going to find that her awesomeness is going to get her into a shitload of trouble. And don't worry about Bella not being pretty. She's an angel. Tom was just being a complete jackass. She's actually very beautiful.

Chapter XI

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 4th of September 1992

11:00 AM

The dark-haired woman she hadn't dreamt about since a year before stood in the snow, and wore a dark green cloak and was looking up with wide and innocent eyes. The woman sat on a stone bench as the snow fell on her and even though she didn't appear to have a warming charm on she looked completely comfortable in the bitter cold.

Bella watched in surprise. She was always in her dreams but she was never this close so just in case she hid behind a large marble statue of what appeared to be Morgan le Fay.

"Snow...such innocence, such beauty, and such purity," the woman murmured. She closed her eyes and felt the white snowfall on her alabaster skin. Lean arms wrapped themselves around her waist and she leaned back into the man who had appeared behind her. He was wearing a hood that shadowed over his face and he placed his chin on top of her head.

"Just like you."

"Never. Not anymore. I lost that a long time ago, my love" the woman responded. The man chuckled.

"Lost it to whom, may I ask?" The man asked as the woman gave him a cheeky smile. Bella slid from behind the marble statue to the stone bench, a little way from the couple but still in hearing range and sat down.

"Who do you think? You, love. Where are my brothers and sister?" the woman asked the man as he tilted his head. Bella watched from her perch on a stone bench it was a courtyard, she understood now. She could see stained-glass windows around and if she had to guess, she'd say that they were at a cathedral.

"Your sister is with Apollo and Thanatos is having his breakfast" the man answered. The woman frowned and She turned around to face the man and was still in his arms.

"It's Yule. We should all be together."

"We will gather them soon...we do have the Yule Ball for the followers. Uncle insisted that we follow traditions. And he knows how much you love Yule and dancing" the man said, patiently. The woman smiled and pulled away.

"I haven't danced in so long. I am not surprised about how excited I am. Happy Yuletide, my Lord" the woman said, teasingly. She curtsied and the man seemed to understand. He couldn't help but smile.

"I can't really tell how excited you are. You always look excited. However, I must have yet to wish you a happy Yuletide, Ana. So...happy Yuletide, Ana. May I have this dance?" the man murmured and he bowed as the woman nodded with a grin and lifted her skirt. Bella could now see that the skirt was crimson, the robes she had underneath her dark green cloak were red, like the color of blood. They began to waltz, gracefully in the snow and they didn't notice a pale haired man, an Italian man, and the future Hermione from the mirror standing in an archway, watching them. A beautiful woman with long dirty blonde hair stood next to the pale haired man. Bella recognized the woman as an Elf. Her ears were slightly pointed and she was smiling.

"They look beautiful together" the Elf woman said while the pale-haired man nodded.

"They love each other very much, I agree" he said, quietly while dream/future Hermione was smiling and leaned against the tall man.

They watched the pair dance to their imaginary music, gracefully as the pair appeared to be in their own world entirely. The woman placed both hands on the sides of the man's face and pulled back the hood. Bella couldn't see his face from the angle she was at. Bella could see a platinum ring around the woman's finger with a cracked onyx in the middle of it on the woman, Ana's, left ring finger while the man had a golden ring with a large emerald in it.

"Love you" Ana murmured. The man leaned down to touch his forehead to Ana's. Bella could see that he had black hair and that reached his shoulders and long pale fingers. He brushed his fingertips against Ana's cheek.

"And I love you as well."

The dreamed swirled into nonexistence and suddenly Bella's world was burning.

Bella shot up with sweat pouring from her face and let out a bloodcurdling scream as her scar burned, fiercely. She opened her eyes to see Sirius, Ron, Hermione, Ginny, Gideon, Fred, George, Madam Pomfrey, Dumbledore, McGonagall, and Tom surrounding her. Bella screamed again and began struggling to get up.

"Let me up!" Bella commanded. She pushed past the others and looked out the window and sighed in relief to see that it wasn't snowing. She slid down, with her hands against the window and closed her eyes.

"Are you okay, Bella?" a voice whispered, sounding half frightened. Bella turned to see Gideon standing there with his hand outstretched. Bella nodded and walked almost zombie like towards Tom. She grabbed his wrist and he looked at her in complete surprise.

"My wand. Where's my wand?" she whispered Tom presented her with the holly wand and she grabbed it tightly. Her brow furrowed and she pulled him down by his wrist so that his ear was to her lips.

"My other wand, Marvolo. Where is it?" she murmured. Tom frowned and pulled away from her. He looked at her through narrowed eyes.

"What other wand?" Tom asked, patiently Bella seemed to be possessed by something and she seemed to be trying to fight if the flickering expressions continuing to appear on her face was anything to go by.

"The wand, Marvolo. The wand. I feel a connection to another wand...my scar, my scar" moaned Bella in pain. Tom leaned down and touched her forehead.

"Bella Potter. Sit down" he commanded. Bella glared at him.

"That's not my name! I can't remember my name. It...it starts with an...an..." Bella whispered, brokenly. She burst into sobs and everyone looked positively unnerved. Sirius, Tom, and Dumbledore didn't know what to do, Madam Pomfrey went to fetch a calming draught, and Hermione hugged Bella, tightly.

"It'll be okay, Bell. It'll be okay, I promise. Did you have a nightmare?" Hermione murmured. Bella shook her head.

"No...it was one of those dreams that made my scar hurt. I-it was about a woman...and a man and it was snowing. They man and woman were dancing in the snow and...you were there Hermione as well with two other men and a woman. You were watching and it was a cathedral that's all I remember" Bella murmured as Dumbledore crossed over to the two girls.

"Bella, are you sure there wasn't anything else you remember?" Dumbledore asked. Ron frowned.

"But...wasn't it just a silly dream?" Ron asked and Bella turned and glared at him, fiercely.

"That wasn't a dream. It was a premonition" Bella said as she yelled at him. She turned back to Dumbledore and tilted her head, frowning trying to desperately to remember.

"A ring there was a ring on Ana's finger. The woman's name was Ana, and the ring it was platinum and it had a cracked onyx stone on it" Bella exclaimed and both Dumbledore and Tom paled and looked at each other but for two completely different reasons. Dumbledore nodded and Pomfrey forced a calming draught down the girl's mouth.

"I see. I think it is time we take our leave. Children, you should head to your next class as soon as possible" Dumbledore said, quietly. Fred and George stood to leave and gave Bella thumbs up. Dumbledore waited for the other kids but they didn't seem willing to move.

"Get better, Bella. Oliver may hold a surprise Quidditch practice" Fred warned. Bella nodded, quietly.

"Will you be okay, Bella?" Ginny asked, quietly. Bella didn't even notice her odd behavior. She looked shaken and she was clutching Gideon's hand rather tightly and her other hand was her throat.

"I'll be fine, Ginny. Go back to class" Bella whispered, hoarsely. Gideon followed his sister, never letting go as they left. Bella turned to her best friends while they sat there, resolutely.

"You won't leave, even if I ask you, will you?" Bella sighed as Ron shook his head and crossed his arms.

"You're my best mate, even if you're a girl" Ron said as if that one statement said it all. Hermione's eyes were black again and she grabbed Bella by the hand.

"Bella Anastasia Potter, you're crazy if you think I'll leave you in this right state" Hermione said, admonishingly. Bella gave a slight smirk at this but it was half-hearted. Dumbledore smiled at their loyalty to the girl.

"I don't want to dream, Marvolo" she whispered and Tom looked at her through dark eyes and nodded,

"Do you want me to block the dreams?" he asked. She nodded and turned to glance through the window and at Hermione and her worried friends. Her eyes landed on Sirius who looked on the edge of having a panic attack.

"Yes please block them" she said, just as quietly as she had before. Tom closed his eyes and lifted his wand. Sirius' eyes widened and Tom held up a hand.

"Black, I'll have to use Legilimency to see what's causing the problem. I need your expressed agreement" Tom said.

"Doe, are you sure? Do you even know what it Legilimency is?" demanded Sirius. Bella looked at her Uncle with a scowl. She winced as her scar burned once again Tom caught the flinch and scowled at it.

"Don't undermine my intelligence, Uncle Sirius I'm sure I want this. You don't know how it feels. The dream may have seemed pleasant

but from all the people except for the Elf, Dark magic radiated" Bella said, quietly. Everyone froze and McGonagall leaned forward.

"Miss Potter, you must be mistaken. The Elves have been a dying and hidden race of magical creature for centuries. One would not suddenly take sides" McGonagall said, gently or as gently as the stern woman could get. Bella scowled once more and looked determined.

"No she was an Elf, her ears were pointed and she was pale, willowy, and tall. She wore the purple robes of the council and she had large grey eyes" Bella said, determinedly. No one questioned her again. Tom touched his wand to her forehead and cleared his throat.

"Close your eyes, brat—" Tom started. Bella lifted her hand.

"Don't call me that if it's impossible for you to call me by my first name, my middle name will do."

"Fine, Anastasia. Close your eyes. Good...Legilimens" Tom commanded. He forced his way into Bella's mindscape.

His eyes widened as he looked at it.

It was a long corridor of onyx and paintings filled the walls. They were all of different sizes and depicted different scenes. Tom glanced away and looked around. At one end of the hall was a locked door with what appeared to be a label on it. At the other end was another locked door. Tom moved forward, towards the left, and glanced around. The paintings were vivid in color and they were constantly moving. He watched the dream she had described and his eyes widened as he recognized the man and woman.

"She doesn't recognize who..." he said, quietly to himself. He quieted himself down as he realized that she would be able to hear everything he said he walked, quickly, passing the memories depicted on the walls. At the end of the corridor, an iron door stood. There wasn't a handle it had simple plaque on it.

'The Unknown'

Tom looked at it curiously before crossing to the other end of the corridor. That way, the paintings came faster and faster, changing and going like a never-ending cycle.

That door wasn't labeled.

But on the door was the sign of the Deathly Hallows. But it did have an ornate doorknob. Tom's hands went to the doorway. As soon as he touched it, it swung open and he entered the dimly lit room. Bella lay on a bed, her eyes closed. She was much older, looking about 17. Her hair was spread along the pillows and she kept whimpering in her sleep. He knew that she was dreaming again of the future.

"Wake up, Miss Potter."

His voice didn't seem to rouse her out of her slumber. Tom frowned in thought and leaned forward.

"Enervate!" he called pointing his wand. She jolted in her sleep but still didn't awake. He sighed.

"Brat, wake up."

She became as still as a corpse and her breathing even slowed a little. Tom cursed under his breath before approached the side of her bed. He leaned over and inspected her she was wearing a long black dress that spilled over the side of the bed. Her hair stood out against emerald bedspread. The girl looked so pale and so waxy. Almost like a doll.

"Bella, wake up. Wake up..." he murmured. Her eyelids fluttered the tiniest bit before closing again. Tom leaned down over the woman on the bed. He couldn't even really think of her as Bella. He leaned down until there was only a millimeter between the two.

"Wake up, Anastasia. Wake up, Ana" murmured Tom. The words roused the Bella look-a-like and she shot up. Tom only had a second to dodge her. She was breathing hard and she turned to look at him with wide eyes.

"You woke me up..." the Bella look-a-like murmured. Tom looked at her with narrowed eyes.

"Who exactly are you?" he demanded. Bella look-a-like's eyes narrowed.

"I have many names. I am Victory, I am Conquest, I am Nikita, I am the Ressurrected One, and I am 'she who will rise again'" Victory said. Tom nodded and tilted his head.

"What are you would be the appropriate question, then?" Tom asked. Victory nodded and gave him a slight smirk.

"I am Bella as she will be in a matter of years it all depends on her choices. Her choice between Dumbledore and Gideon and..." Victory started. Tom took a step closer to her and looked at her in a confused manner. Victory took another step towards her and lifted her left hand to brush against Tom's face. He saw the ring Bella had been speaking of.

"And who?"

"Grindelwald and...you" she ended hissing in Parseltongue before giving Tom a deep kiss. Their lips fit together perfectly. Tom couldn't even react as Victory ran her tongue over his lips before pulling away and smiling.

"I'm going to savor that taste until Bella is older. Goodbye, love" Victory said before pulling back. Tom could see as the room warped. He knew he was exiting Bella's mindscape.

He emerged gasping for air as Bella's glazed eyes flickered back to life. Her eyes widened as she felt the presence awaken inside of her and form an iron hard barrier around her mind.

"What was that?" Bella whispered in shock. Dumbledore's eyes narrowed as they made eye contact. He tried to enter her mind when he heard a low and sultry laugh before being expelled back.

"Someone is protecting her mind. But it doesn't sound like Tom. Tom, what happened?" Dumbledore asked, business like, suddenly. Tom was staring at Bella in wonder and he blinked.

"An older version of herself is guarding her mind. It is fine Bella, sleep. Sleep now" Tom said, sharply. Bella's eyes widened,

infinitesimally at the way he was addressing her. She decided to question later and just sleep. She was exhausted.

"Will I dream?" Bella asked. Tom shook his head.

"Anastasia, go to sleep and maybe you'll see" Tom said, baiting her. Bella sneered at him and settled down. She looked back at Sirius and held out her hand.

"Will you promise to be here when I wake up?" Bella asked. Sirius nodded without even asking Dumbledore or Tom. Dumbledore didn't seem to mind but Tom's expression soured.

"Of course I will Doe. I'm never going to leave you. I promise" Sirius said, quietly. Bella nodded and turned to Ron.

"Go back to class, Ron. I'll be fine. I swear and when I'm back on my feet from this damned disorder I'm going to attempt to kick your ass in wizard chess" Bella smirked. Ron snorted and picked up his bag.

"We'll see about that Bella come on, Mione" he said, wandering to the door. Hermione nodded and turned around when Bella grabbed the girl by her wrist and the girl turned around.

"Mione...don't lose yourself in it" Bella whispered. Hermione jerked her wrist from Bella's hand with wide eyes. Tom raised an eyebrow.

Sometimes the things she said didn't make sense but did at the same time. Was the door that said 'Unknown'...

"What are you talking about?" Hermione said, evenly. She almost sounded cold. Bella smirked and shook her head.

"You can't lie to Anastasia, darling" she tusked before smirking and then passing out. Hermione pulled away before walking away, a hard look in her dark eyes. She glanced back at the sleeping girl before following Ron out of the Hospital Wing.

"Tom, Minerva, if you will join in me my office" Dumbledore said. Tom grimaced, knowing what was coming up next.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 4th of September 1992

11:35 AM

When the three teachers reached the headmaster's office, Tom was trying not to have a panic attack.

Because Dark Lord's do not have panic attacks.

He gritted his teeth as Dumbledore sat behind the desk and in the chair that he so coveted. He wanted that seat more than anything and he would kill for it. Behind that desk he would have power behind his imagination.

It had nothing to do with being magically or politically powerful. He would have power of an army of children that he could brainwash...er...sway to his side.

"Lemon drop, my boy? Lemon drop, Minerva?" Dumbledore asked as soon as they sat down. Minerva simply gave Dumbledore a disbelieving look. Dumbledore turned to look at Tom. Tom did his best to not glare at the man but Dumbledore still had that stupid innocent expression on his face.

"I don't want any of your muggle candy" Tom spat. Dumbledore nodded and leaned back in his chair. He didn't say anything he just picked up a silver instrument and inspected it. He poked at it with his wand and began to tinker with it. Tom stared at the man in disbelief. Minerva seemed a little more annoyed.

"Albus! Is there a good reason why I am not teaching my class?" demanded Minerva. Dumbledore looked up from the instrument and nodded, sagely. He placed the ash wand down in front of him and the silver instrument.

"There is. Tom wasn't exactly telling the truth about Miss Potter's mindscape. What did happen?" Dumbledore asked. Minerva's eyes went wide as Tom's eyes narrowed and his hand clenched into a fist.

"Her mind was incredibly organized for someone her age it consists of a long corridor built with onyx bricks, and her memories were in

portraits that were vivid in color" Tom stated as if he was reading a report. Minerva looked at him, expectantly.

"Her memories were stored in pictures?"

"No. Portraits. They were painted. I saw the one with this Ana figure and the other people. I couldn't make out their faces, most likely because she couldn't" Tom lied. Dumbledore seemed to trust him and didn't make a comment. Tom held back his smirk. Dumbledore had never trusted him as a student. This was a nice change.

"Continue Tom," Dumbledore prompted. Tom nodded, stoically.

"At each end of the corridors was a door. At one end of the corridor was a door marked 'Unknown'. It did not have a doorknob, thus I deemed that it could not be opened by anyone except for Miss Potter. At the other end was a door with a doorknob but without a label or mark of some sort. I opened the door to reveal an older Bella Potter. She was asleep on the bed and I tried to awaken her," Tom continued. Dumbledore nodded and leaned back with a sparkle in his eyes. Tom cringed.

"Was it like the muggle fairytale, Sleeping Beauty?" Dumbledore asked. McGonagall almost choked on air. Tom did.

"No, you old moronic...no. I tried 'Enervate' but it did not work. I then called her name. I called her by the name of 'Miss Potter' and she didn't move. I called her brat and she turned into what would be equivalent to a wax doll. I called her 'Bella'. Her eyelids fluttered before she became still. I then called her Anastasia and she awoke. She...wasn't exactly Bella. She said that she was 'she who will rise again'. She then said that Bella may become her depending on choices. It's all about choices" Tom repeated. Dumbledore nodded and leaned back.

"Albus, what does this mean?" Minerva asked, almost worriedly and Albus tilted his head.

"I have my suspicions I will think about this and get back to you. Minerva, you may go teach your class. Tom, I'm sure you'll wish to see Bella" Albus said and Tom stood up with a scowl on his face.

"I have papers to grade and a stalker to stop. I don't wish to see a little unimportant girl," Tom said. Albus' retained his amused expression even after Tom left the room.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 5th of September 1992

4:30 AM

Bella was asleep in her bed. The dreams had not come back to her since the day Tom had ventured into her mind. She was violently shaken away from her deep sleep. Her wand was in hand in seconds and a curse on the tip of her tongue. She blinked the blurriness away from her eyes to see Katie Bell standing over her.

The third-year girl was shaking the smaller girl and Bella shot up, looking around worriedly.

"Whassamatter?" Bella hissed and Katie smiled at the girl, tiredly.

"Quidditch practice come on" Katie whispered.

Bella turned to look at the window, wondering how she had slept in so late in the day. Then, she realized that she should've taken Fred and George's warning to heart. It was the crack of dawn. The sun was only half way over the horizon.

"What the hell..." Bella said, under her breath. She swung herself out of bed and slid on a pair of jeans and her top Quidditch robe over a long sleeved turtleneck. She scrawled a note to Hermione, just in case she wasn't back before the girl woke up before walking down the stairs.

"Bella!"

"Bella Potter, smile!"

Bella's eyes widened when a bright flash filled her vision and she fell back. Katie Bell was laughing at her and Bella scowled at the girl. She looked up to see that Colin Creevy boy who tended to stalk her

but never approach her. Gideon was with him. Bella glared at the two.

"What? It's the crack of dawn! Go to bed!" Bella snarled. The two looked at her in surprise and Colin seemed to be in too much shock that Bella had actually spoken to him. Gideon looked at her, hopefully.

"We were wondering where you were going. We heard that fifth year Quidditch captain talking to the Katie girl. So where are you going? On another one of those super cool adventures?" Gideon asked, excitedly. Bella rolled her eyes at his antics as she felt her stomach growl.

"Where do you think I'm going? Your deductibility skills are rubbish, Gideon. I'm wearing my Quidditch robes and have a broom in hand. Obviously, I'm going on another 'super cool' adventure to destroy Grindelwald, forever. And then I'm going to marry you and have three kids named James Weasley, Albus Weasley, and Lily Weasley..." Bella snorted. Gideon had gone silent and then deathly pale.

"Did you read my journal?" he whispered. Bella froze and put a hand on his shoulder, giving him a serious look. She shook her head.

"No. It was a joke."

Gideon turned the color of a tomato. He looked away and Colin's eyes were wide. Bella took a step back as Katie began to roar with laughter. Bella sighed and shook her head.

"Oh...can we...er...go watch you play?" Gideon stuttered out through his utter embarrassment. Bella shrugged, weakly. She didn't know what to say. Had Gideon really came up with all that crap?

"I don't care but I got to go. Oliver will be off his rocker if I don't show up soon" Bella said, walking away, much more quickly than necessary. Katie's laughter had turned to giggles and she looked at the girl next to her.

"He really fancies you. He's a first year, right?" Katie asked. Bella nodded once and tilted her head.

"Yes. And I know he fancies me. Ron, his older brother, points it out to me all the time" Bella sighed. Katie smirked as the two made it on to the Quidditch Pitch. When they finally got down there, they sat in a low dugout type area where Wood was.

"What took you so long?" asked Oliver once they got there. Katie smirked.

"Bella had a run in with her most devoted admirer" Katie teased and the elder set of Weasley twins gave wide grins.

"That would be our little brother, Gideon" Fred said, chuckling tiredly and George nodded and then looked like he was falling asleep before he pointed up.

"Oh...there he is now. With some other kid" George commented. Oliver knew that Gideon was trustworthy if he was Fred and George's brother but he looked instantly suspicious about the other kid.

"Someone get him away! He might be a Slytherin spy..." Oliver said, lowering his voice towards the end. Bella rolled her eyes and gave a loud yawn.

"He can't be. He's a Gryffindor" Bella explained. George nodded before glancing across the field.

"And the Slytherins don't need a spy" he commented. Oliver and the rest of the team looked at him startled.

"Why is that?" Angelina Johnson asked. Fred pointed to the area across the field.

"That would be because they're here in person."

Like a sea of green and silver, the Slytherin Quidditch team walked over in formation. The captain was towards the front with the two Beaters flanking him, the three Chasers were right behind the Beaters and the Seeker, who wasn't visible, was probably behind them, rounding out the group.

"I booked the Pitch! I booked it!" spat Oliver in rage. Marcus Flint gave a greasy smirk and produced a piece of parchment.

"Ah, yes but I've got a note specially signed by Professor Snape to train our new Seeker" Marcus said, smirking.

"You've got a new Seeker? Who is it?" Oliver asked, suddenly distracted. He was eager to scope out Bella's competition.

The new Seeker walked forward, confidently. His platinum blond hair was slicked back and he had a smirk on his face and Bella's lips curled into a sneer.

"Him? The little dragon is your Seeker?" she scoffed and Draco Malfoy glared at her and lifted his chin.

"Afraid of some competition, princess?" he snarled back. Bella stood up and glared at him rolling up her sleeves.

"Come on, Dragon I can take you, here and now, muggle-style" she hissed, her hands clenching into fists. Alicia Spinnet and Fred grabbed her by the back of her robes to keep her from going at it with Draco.

"Aren't you Lucius Malfoy's son?" asked George.

"Funny you should mention Malfoy's father. Let me show you the generous gift he gave us" Flint said. The team extended their brooms. They were black and sleek and made every broom, except for maybe the Nimbus Two Thousand, look like child's play.

"So, he bought his way on to the team. I'm not surprised" Bella snorted. Draco gave her a foul look.

"Bet you couldn't even afford one, Princess Potter" Draco hissed. Bella snatched her robes from Angelina's loosening grip. Fred had already let go to inspect the brooms. She stalked up to him with anger written on her face.

"Let me tell you something, Draco. You've obviously forgotten who I am so let's go over it again. I am the future Lady Potter-Black-Slytherin I could buy a whole fleet of broomsticks and then still have enough money to buy out your entire family" Bella hissed, low enough for only the people immediately surrounding her to hear.

Flint's eyes widened at the information but he didn't comment. He turned to look over his shoulder when he his lips curled in disgust.

"Oh look, a field invasion" he said, calmly.

Ron and Hermione were walking over to the opposing teams.

Bella already knew this wasn't going to end well.

"Anastasia, what's happening? I thought you came out here for practice?" Hermione said. Everyone looked around in confusion. Fred and George exchanged looks.

"Anastasia?" they murmured to each other. Draco didn't seem fazed at all by the nickname.

"What's he doing here?" Ron spat. Draco smirked at the redhead.

"I'm the new Slytherin Seeker, weasel. Everyone was admiring the brooms my father purchased for the team" Draco smirked. Hermione made a noise in the back of her throat. Ron gasped, looking at the sleek brooms.

"At least no one on the Gryffindor team had to buy their way in. They got in by pure talent" Hermione snapped, sharply.

"No one asked your opinion, you crazy bitch" Draco said, smirking. Everyone gasped and Hermione froze up and glared at him, taking a step forward.

"I'm not crazy."

"Notice, she didn't make a comment about her being a bitch. The filthy little Mudblood" Draco sneered. Hermione's lips spread into a smirk as everyone suddenly freaked out.

Flint dived in front of Malfoy and Hermione to keep Fred and George from tackling him. Alicia and Katie gasped.

"How dare you!" Angelina shouted. Ron whipped out his wand, quickly. The long narrow stick was aimed directly at Malfoy.

"You'll pay for that one! Eat slugs!" Ron shouted. Bella noticed a moment too late that the wand was facing the wrong way. A green jet of light shot out at Ron and he was knocked backwards by the force. He landed on his wand and there was a sickening wooden crack. Bella could feel the magical core escaping from the wand and her expression became forlorn as she realized that Ron's wand broke. But that wasn't what truly concerned at the moment. Ron was turning green and everyone's attention was divided between him and Hermione.

"I'm a mudblood and proud of it, Malfoy. And I will always be proud of it. And I'm not crazy" Hermione said, at regular volume and her eyes dark. The last part was drowned by a great belching noise and everyone watched in shock as three slimy slugs slipped from Ron's mouth.

The Slytherin team erupted into laughter. Flint was leaning on his broom to keep standing up and to avoid slipping onto the ground. Malfoy was on all fours, laughing so hard that no sound was coming out of his mouth. Hermione spun around, suddenly and her expression was worried.

"Ron! Ron, are you all right?" Hermione shrieked, worriedly. Bella shook her head.

"We better get him to Hagrid's. It's closer than the castle" Bella said. She slung one of Ron's arms around her shoulders and Hermione supported his other side. When they exited the Quidditch Pitch, they saw Gideon, Colin, and now Ginny appear in their path.

"Ron! Ron are you okay?" Ginny asked, almost repeating the exact same thing Hermione had. Ron only belched in response and Ginny squealed as one of the massive slugs fell on her trainers. She kicked it off and it landed in Ron's face leaving slime as it fell to the ground.

"Could you hold him up so I could get a picture?" Colin asked. Bella scowled.

"No Gideon, Ginny go get Ron's wand. It's broken on the field near Fred and George. Go find some Spellotape and fix it for now, alright?" Bella asked. The pair nodded. They exchanged ominous glances and Gideon's hand slipped up to his neck where Bella could

see a hint of a gold chain. She didn't pay much attention to it. They walked back, nodding and the trio made their way towards the hut Hagrid lived in.

"Bin wonderin' when you'd come ter see me" Hagrid said, smiling. He beckoned them in and Bella explained quickly about Ron's slug problem. Hagrid didn't seem at all bothered and handed Ron a copper basin.

"Better get 'em all up" Hagrid advised. They spent the next few minutes in silence, listening to Ron get sick with slugs dribbling from his mouth every few seconds. Finally, Hermione was fed up with hearing the sickening sounds.

"So Hagrid how's this year going for you?" Hermione asked. Surprisingly, Hagrid scowled.

"Professor Lockhart was givin' me advice on getting' kelpies out of a well. Like I don't know. An' he came bangin' on about some banshee he banished. If one word of it was true, I'd eat my kettle" Hagrid grumbled. Bella snorted and Hagrid looked at her in surprise. Hermione giggled.

"Professor Lockhart and Bella don't really like each other very much. You see, it seems Professor Lockhart has a little crush on Professor Riddle. And I pointed out that Professor Riddle wasn't gay. So, Bella likes to goad him on that. We were assigned an essay. It was only a foot long and at the top she wrote 'Rejected, rejected, oh, you were rejected. R-E-J-E-C-T-E-D. Rejected'. It was very amusing" Hermione said and everyone laughed along with her, though surprised at the revelation.

"I'll probably get a T on that one. But it was worth it. And if Marvolo looks over all of them, he'll bring up my grade because I made my essay thoughtful and not idiotic. Apparently he hates morons...and idiots. He spent most of last year, conditioning me from idiocy apparently" Bella grumbled. They laughed again but were joined by a new laugh. It sounded bitter and everyone looked over to watch Ron as he sat up and placed the now full basin towards the side.

"So tell me, wha' happened?" Hagrid said, finally. Hermione sat up.

"He was trying to curse Malfoy" she said, matter-of-factly.

"He called her a Mudblood" Ron explained. Hagrid gasped.

"He didn't" Hagrid growled. Ron nodded.

"It's such a disgusting thing to call someone. Common blood. Dirty blood" Ron spat. Hermione sat up and crossed her arms.

"And I know that. I took no offense at it. Because I am a Muggleborn. And if someone calls me a Mudblood, I'll be proud of it. And that's why, when I first introduced myself to Professor Lockhart, I said 'Hermione Granger, resident Mudblood'" Hermione said, firmly. Hagrid gasped.

"Why would you go and do that?" Hagrid demanded. Hermione gave him a grim smile.

"Because that's who I am."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 5th of September 1992

11:00 PM

Hello, Tom. Are you there? Are you going to answer me?

Hello, Bella.

TOM! Why didn't you answer me before?

I didn't feel like it.

You seriously remind me of the other Tom I know. He's a total jackass.

I'm sure.

Why do I detect some sarcasm from you?

Your detecting skills are astounding, even through paper. Most impressive.

I'm still getting that sarcasm vibe from you.

Good. That was the point. Now, why were you disturbing my peaceful rest?

You're a book. You can't rest.

I'm much more than a simple diary. Now answer my question.

Fine...I was just wondering if you knew about any weird animals in Hogwarts.

What do you mean by 'weird animals' as you so eloquently put it?

You're a total smartass, you know that? Anyway, I mean magical creatures. I heard this growling, echoing in the halls. I was all alone and the growls were getting louder when suddenly Ginny Weasley, Fangirl # 1 turned the corner and gasped when she saw me. And then the growls disappeared.

I can't say that I do know at the moment but if I remember anything I might let you know for a price of course

Hmm...if I compare you to the Tom I know, that means you want my soul.

Perhaps...

...

A/N: Hola! Ni Hao! Ciao! What's up? I'm sorry I haven't updated. My awesome beta was taking a while. Life's been hectic for her so I don't blame her. Tell me what you thought about this chapter. I feel it was a little rushed. Well, by the time you get this, the next chapter would've been finished. It's taking me a while to crank out new chapters, since I'm so focused on school. Well, oh well.

Next Chapter: Halloween

Chapter XII

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 19th of September 1992

8:00 AM

"Happy birthday, Mione!"

Hermione smiled at her excited friend and looked out the window. Hermione sighed and turned back to look at Bella who wasn't grinning now. Instead she was pouting causing Hermione frowned in response.

"What's wrong?" Hermione asked Bella looked away and sighed dramatically.

"You're 13 now I hate being the youngest" Bella moaned causing Hermione to roll her eyes and began to tie her hair back in a high ponytail, as she'd taken to doing every morning. As she was tying her hair, she didn't notice Bella pull out a large parcel. When she looked back up, Bella all but shoved the parcel into her face.

"A present. What is it?" Hermione asked, excitedly. Bella raised an eyebrow and gestured at it, wordlessly. Hermione opened it and saw that a piece of parchment fluttered out first.

Dear Mione,

Making this book has taken me a very long time. It is a translation of the parseltome on battle tactics. I know how fascinated you are with battle, warriors, and war in general. So here it is. The book was written in the year 1300 in Parseltongue and English words are twice as long. You'd better thank me.

Love,

Bella

Hermione stared at the book in shock. It was new leather and she could smell new parchment. She looked at her best friend with wide eyes. Bella was smirking at her astonished gaze.

"Bell...I don't know what to say..."

"Don't say anything" was Bella's only response.

Later, that day as they sat in the library reading while Ron played wizard's chess with Seamus when the duo was interrupted.

"Bella..."

Bella looked up to see the fiery headed Ginny Weasley with a girl with large grey eyes and arched eyebrows that made her look permanently surprised. Bella blinked before closing her book on Elven culture. The other girl's eyes flickered to the cover before her lips spread into a dreamy smile.

"Hey, Ginny. What's up?" Bella asked, leaning back in her chair. Hermione barely glanced up before bending back over her new book. She was taking notes on almost every tactic and she already had a notebook half filled up. She knew she'd have to order more ink and books, and she couldn't forget quills, Hermione added mentally. Ginny smiled at Bella.

"Well, I'm fine. I'm doing really well in Ravenclaw I was surprised that I got into there, but anyway, this is Luna Lovegood she wanted to meet you" Ginny said, introducing the girl. Luna smiled dreamily at Bella before stepping forward, extending her hand.

"Hello, Anastasia" Luna said, softly. Bella froze as the girl raised her other hand to brush part of her hair behind her pointed ears. The girl...Luna, was the Elf in her dreams.

"Luna..." Bella said, trailing off. Hermione looked up sharply at the girl calling Bella by the name that nowadays only Tom called her by. Luna smiled, softly and tilted her head.

"So you dreamed of me?" Luna asked, quietly. Hermione straightened even more and glanced at the girl's ears.

"You're an Elf" Hermione said, pointing out the obvious. Luna and Ginny exchanged looks before they both broke into wide smiles.

"Yes, I am and I'm also neutral...for now" Luna said, matter-of-factly. Hermione leaned forward and then her eyebrows rose as she looked over Luna. Bella was more or less, mentally hitting herself. She couldn't believe she hadn't realized that Luna was an Elf. She had seen the girl around and she knew that something about the girl had been calling to her. She was tall for her age, thin and willowy, and her hair looked soft enough to rival a veela's hair, and she had that strange beauty likes all elves. However her eyes were not the neon colors of the Elves.

So what exactly was she?

"I'm half-Elf, if you're wondering. My mom was a full-blooded Elf" Luna said, answering the unasked question while both girls nodded in response.

"I knew you weren't a full-blooded Elf. Your eyes don't fit the characteristics" Bella said and Luna nodded and she blinked owlishly.

"Yes...what do you think of Riddles, Anastasia?" Luna asked, with grey eyes. Ginny watched in confusion as Bella's eyes narrowed. Bella stared at the girl through narrowed eyes and couldn't figure out if she was speaking of Tom or actual riddles. She decided to give an answer that would make sense for both.

"I think Riddles are hard to figure out. Why?" Bella asked, carefully and Luna gave a slight smile.

"Because...it seems that your task in life...is to solve them."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 31st of October 1992

10:50 PM

Bella sat at the feast eating quickly. Hermione gave her a sullen look while Ron was eating rather rambunctiously.

"Stop looking at me like I did something wrong, Mione" Bella finally snapped. Hermione looked at the peeved off girl, anxiously before

scowling again and crossing her arms. She was picking at her tart, tiredly.

"We should've gone to Headless Nick's Deathday Party. We did say we'd go" Hermione said. Ron guffawed around his food and swallowed thickly. Hermione's nose wrinkled in disgust.

"Who would want to go to a party with dead people? They're dead. It'd be boring" Ron said. Bella nodded in agreement before letting out a loud laugh as something tickled her hand. She looked down and extended her arm. Nagini slithered up the girl's arm and coiled the rest of her hanging body around the girl's waist. Bella kissed the snake on the head.

"Hello Nagini" Bella murmured, lowly. Nagini hissed in content as Bella stroked the top of her head.

"Hello, speaker-child. It is All Hallow's Eve" Nagini stated. Bella nodded and sighed, quietly. Nagini looked up in curiosity at the downtrodden girl. She looked exhausted, as if she had stayed awake all night.

"I have a bad feeling..." Bella said, quietly. Nagini didn't make another comment and sat comfortably, looking up at the girl. She inspected her and couldn't understand why she smelled so much like her master.

She could feel the great power radiating within her and it just made her respect the speaker-child even more but she wouldn't say that to her. The girl would have to discover this ancient power on her own. It wasn't her place to reveal such things it was Fate's.

Hermione sighed, quietly and glanced over at the Slytherin table. She hoped to see that Italian boy from the train and blushed when she realized she didn't even know his name and she was obsessing over him. Bella continued to forget to ask Professor Riddle if he spoke Italian.

She glanced over the table slowly and finally caught sight of the Italian boy sitting next to Draco Malfoy and another girl. She had dark hair and grey eyes and she was very pretty. She leaned over the boy's shoulders and kissed his cheek. The boy looked down at her blankly.

Hermione glanced away, quickly and could only blink. So, he was one of those people who had a bunch of admirers. She glared at the pumpkin pasty on her plate. Of course she, the Mudblood, didn't have a chance! She couldn't even believe that she had thought of it.

"What's wrong with you? Did the big bad pumpkin pasty say everything in the textbooks are wrong?"

Hermione looked up to glower at Ron who looked taken aback by her fierce glare.

"What's wrong Mione?" Bella asked, just as surprised, Hermione gritted her teeth and took a deep breath, letting her eyelids slide close. She shook her head and tried not to let the voices in her head to get to her.

"Nothing...sorry I just...was arguing the Pythagorean theorem in my head. It may be totally incorrect that the square of the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the two other sides" Hermione babbled while Ron and Bella gave her a strange look.

"I don't know what the bloody hell you're talking about" Ron said, blankly. Bella nodded in agreement.

"What the hell is hypo...whatever?" Bella asked. Hermione straightened at the question and finally smiled. They were distracting her from the unnamed Italian boy and her predicament.

"A hypotenuse is the longest side of a right triangle and it is always opposite to the actual right angle...you do know what that is?" Hermione asked, almost worriedly. Bella looked completely impatient when Hermione hinted that she might not know something that Hermione did.

"I do know what a right triangle is, thank you very much. I did go to primary school. Those who lived in the Wizarding World before coming here aren't completely incompetent" Bella snapped. Hermione looked at her in shock and shook her head, though was a little annoyed that Bella had said such a thing.

"I never said that..." Hermione trailed off, going into patient teacher mode. Bella snorted and rolled her eyes.

"I know exactly what you said. You think that because I was raised a witch, that I don't know what a right triangle is. I know what it is. It's a triangle with a 90 degree angle. I'm not that stupid, Hermione. I may not be able to rattle off about Aristotle and his five elements. I may not know the many theorems of mathematics but I assure, Hermione, that I am not stupid" Bella ranted in anger. Hermione stared at wide-eyes, before her nose flared.

"Let me tell you something before you go assuming things! I was just asking a simple question! If anything, it wasn't for your benefit, it was for Ron's!" Hermione snapped. Ron looked highly affronted.

"Hey!" he called out. The two girls thoroughly ignored him, in favor of glaring at each other. They looked away but didn't budge from their seats. Hermione watched as Bella hissed something under her breath to Nagini. Nagini slithered away and towards her master. There were little shrill squeals from the first years but Nagini finally wrapped herself over her master's chair. Bella scowled and pushed her plate away. She was suddenly not hungry anymore.

"I'm not hungry. I'm going now" Bella said, sharply. She refused to look at Hermione and she turned to Ron.

"What?" he asked as she stood there, expectantly. Bella grabbed his arm and yanked him out of his seat. He stumbled backwards onto the ground and looked up at her in shock.

"What the bloody hell are you doing on the floor? Let's go!" commanded Bella. Hermione stood as well and crossed her arms and the trio walked in silence from the loud dining hall. As they got into the quiet stone halls, Bella felt something. The back of her neck was prickling and she froze.

I am cold and hard. I bring those not solid.

I bring those alive yet their spirits have ascended from this world.

My heart is cracked in half yet I live not.

I am the stone of the riverbed.

What am I?

The riddle brought shivers down Bella's spine and she looked around. There was no one there and Hermione and Ron didn't seem to have heard it. Apparently, Ron saw her spooked expression.

"What's wrong?" he asked. Bella shook her head and just turned to Hermione with dark and haunted eyes.

"My task in life is to solve riddles. I heard a riddle..." Bella whispered. She followed the voice that was speaking. The voice was turning into bloodthirsty growls that reminded Bella, strangely, of a lion. Ron and Hermione looked at her bewildered as they wandered from the stairs that would've led them to the common room.

"COME ON! I have to answer the riddle!" Bella shouted. She jumped up the other stairs that led to the second floor before running up the stairs and then into an abandoned corridor. Bella stood, staring at the wall.

I am as black as your heart, Anastasia Slytherin.

Riddle me this

What am I?

The Library of Corvus has been opened.

Enemies of the Heirs,

Beware.

Right below it was the sign of Grindelwald. It was a large triangle inside was a circle. Running down from the top of triangle down to the base was a line. The color was the color of new glistening blood.

"W-what is that?" whispered Ron, pointing with a trembling finger to the shadow hanging from the torch bracket. The torch within the bracket was burning, illuminating the blood on the walls.

"That...that's Mrs. Norris!" Hermione yelled horrorstruck yet fascinated. She was staring at Filch's cat. Mrs. Norris was hanging

from the bracket by her tail and she was paralyzed completely. Not even her eyes were moving. But that didn't concern Bella.

Bella couldn't move. She was staring at the name written on the wall. She knew who Anastasia Slytherin was. That was her. It was talking about her!

They heard noise as they realized that the feast was ending. Ron looked around and his self-preservation skills kicked in. Obviously, it was up to him. Bella looked terrified and Hermione was too enthralled by Mrs. Norris.

"Come on! Let's get out of here" Ron said. Bella shook her head and she gasped into her hand. Tears fell from her eyes and she turned towards Ron with her eyes wide. She pointed at the name and ignored the gasps from the people that found them. She ignored the magic calling out to her from a familiar source.

"Ron! Shut up!" Bella snapped. She wiped her tears, quickly and swallowed the large lump in her throat. She could feel the people around her and it wouldn't do for people to see her react like that. They would know that she was Anastasia.

"Enemies of the Heirs, beware? You'll be next Mudbloods!"

Bella spun around to see the usual pale Draco Malfoy flushed. His eyes were alive and he looked completely and utterly alive.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 31st of October 1992

11:00 PM

Albus Dumbledore knew that he was a smart man. He also knew he was an exceptionally perceptive man and from the moment he saw Bella Potter, he knew she would be different. On that night, many years ago, he had wanted to be the one to bring her to the Dursleys, but Tom Riddle had decided to bring her to her godfather.

Albus hadn't anticipated Sirius not blowing his top after finding out that Peter Pettigrew had betrayed the Potters to Grindelwald. Sirius

had known that Bella would need him so he stayed. To Albus this wasn't exactly a bad thing. It just made him adjust his plans.

The one thing that made his plans spiral out of control was the fact that Bella seemed to be much darker than he had intended her to be. He wanted her to rely on him. She had so much potential and though Albus had hoped that she wouldn't have to be the Savior of the Wizarding World, it was now apparent that she was.

Gellert had made Horcruxes. And this pained Albus very much but what made the least sense to him in all of this was Gellert's Heir who had yet to do anything in the past 12 years. Dumbledore had dueled the self-proclaimed Lord Voldemort before. If anything, he was just as formidable as Gellert or himself.

However Albus Dumbledore wouldn't dwell on past events. He would focus on the task at hand, and the task at hand would be discovering what had caused the disturbance in the castle's wards. Albus dismissed everyone early and the staff seemed to notice. Albus turned towards Minerva, Tom, and Snape. Lockhart was leaning over Tom's shoulder and the other man looked at him threw narrowed eyes causing Lockhart to lean back, slightly.

"I think it would be prudent for us to go to the second floor. I felt a disturbance" Albus said quietly. Tom focused and closed his eyes. He could feel her magic calling out to his, searching for comfort.

"Anastasia is distraught" Tom said, quietly. Snape didn't seem to recognize who this was but Albus did. He stood.

"How distraught would be good to know" Albus said, quietly. Tom closed his eyes and focused once more before sighing.

"Distraught to the point of hyperventilation."

This sent the teachers walking, quickly down the hallways and up the stairs. Albus was leading the bunch and Lockhart was scurrying after Tom like a puppy a puppy that Tom hated decisively. They finally made it to the crowded corridor. Tom could feel the anger and rage growing within Bella. They finally pushed their way to the front and Tom kept his gasp inside.

"Anastasia Slytherin?" voices whispered. Tom stepped forward but was pushed back when that filthy Squib, Argus Filch pushed forward.

"What's going on here? What's going on...my cat. My cat! What's happened to Mrs. Norris?" demanded Filch.

He looked around with wide eyes before it landed on Bella who was standing directly in front of the stone. Her head was pressed to it and her back was to the audience behind her.

"You! You've murdered my cat!" Filch accused. Bella spun around, her eyes burning the color of Avada Kedavra green. Filch stumbled backwards and Bella had her wand out.

"I didn't do anything to your cat!" Bella snarled. She backed away from him before glancing back up at the message. She shuddered and shook her head.

"Argus! Come with me, Argus!" Dumbledore commanded, detaching Mrs. Norris from the bracket. Tom nodded and glanced at Bella with a hard look. Her eyes were still glowing, making her looked completely touched in the head.

"My office is closest. Miss Potter, Miss Granger, Mister Weasley, please follow" Tom said, sharply. Bella took the lead and stopped next to Draco. They were shoulder to shoulder and Bella glanced at Draco.

"Death."

"Victory."

"War" Hermione murmured, unconsciously. She glanced at the Italian boy who was standing next to Draco.

"Plague" he whispered. Tom's eyes widened as he and Ron heard the murmured words. Bella continued without another word before going down into the dungeons. Lockhart walked next to Tom and glanced at him.

"It was definitely a curse that killed her. Probably the Transmogrification Torture. I've seen it used many times. I know just the counter

curse..." Lockhart bragged. Bella turned just as Tom sneered at Lockhart.

"Would you shut up? That's not even a real curse and Marvolo isn't gay! By Merlin, you don't listen, do you?" Bella snarled before approaching Slytherin's portrait. Lockhart's eyes widened as she began conversing with it, rapidly in Parseltongue. Nobody else looked too affected by it.

"Salazar, it was terrible. Someone's coming after me. I've been hearing riddles. And the Library of Corvus was opened...it's horrible! I feel the need to figure it out and I'm sure something bad is going to happen..." Bella said. Salazar looked at her with warm eyes, even if sneer was in place. He tilted his head.

"Go inside. Marvolo!" Salazar called, looking at Tom. Tom stepped forward.

"Yes?" he said, quietly. Lockhart gasped and he gazed at Tom in awe.

So, he was also bilingual! Gilderoy couldn't believe his luck. He was working with a handsome man who also happened to be one of the strongest wizards in the entire world and he was Lord Slytherin.

"Anastasia has to figure out this riddle and you will help her. No ifs, butts, or ands. Dumbledore, why is Anastasia feeling threatened?" demanded Salazar. Dumbledore's eyes widened in surprise before glancing down at Bella.

"I'm not sure" Dumbledore admitted, though he had many ideas. Bella shook her head and looked at Salazar with a tired look.

"It...it's okay. Open" Bella hissed. The portrait swung open and she led the way inside. Ron and Hermione looked around in wonder, with wide eyes. They had never been Professor Riddle's office.

Hermione watched with curious eyes as Bella walked down the long corridor before making a sharp right and ending up in a big office. Hermione stared with wide eyes and she looked in awe. There were so many books in there it rivaled the library. The office was tall and looked very professional. Bella crossed to the armchair that was only a little way from the desk. Tom sat behind the desk without

even giving Dumbledore the chance. Tom flicked his wand, lighting the candles and then looked at Bella.

She heard him hiss something at her and Hermione was so used to the language being used that she didn't even shudder anymore at the sound of it. That was a feat in itself.

"No. I'm fine, I'm fine" Bella said, answering in English. Tom hissed at her harshly, annoyance coloring his voice. Lockhart looked genuinely curious. Bella rolled her eyes and scowled.

"I could've sworn I just said I was fine" Bella snapped, exasperated. Tom rolled his eyes and gestured at her eyes with his wand and pointed towards the reflective glass towards the side. Bella looked at it with wide eyes before shrugging.

"It does that. It means I'm mentally unhinged. Which I am. I just found a dead cat with a note to me, saying my heart is black as whatever the hell the riddle was talking about. I'm more than unhinged. I'm on the fucking edge of insanity!" Bella snapped in anger. McGonagall gasped. Hermione's eyes widened.

"Language, Miss Potter. Five points from Gryffindor" McGonagall said, as calmly as possible. Bella's sighed and Hermione noticed that her eyes were still that sickly color. Tom swiveled in his chair until he was fully facing Bella. He withdrew his wand and Bella took her own out and they touched the tips together. The tips glowed simply.

"Auratus Revelio" Tom whispered. Bella stood and yanked her wand back just as black and crimson burst from her. Bella flicked her wand and returned the spell to Tom. His turned completely black with hints of emerald. The gold threads erupted and began dripping energy. Bella's aura was represented by black and crimson. Hints of white were quickly turning grey. Tom flicked his wand and the spell ended. Bella followed his example and the magic disappeared.

Dumbledore hadn't even been paying attention. He had been inspecting Mrs. Norris, his nose not even an inch from her fur. McGonagall and Snape looked surprised. Lockhart just looked confused.

"You're not okay. Liar" Tom spat. Bella turned pink and looked away.

"It doesn't matter."

"Your core is in turmoil. Obviously, you don't know what's going on" Tom pointed out. Bella shrugged and pointed at Mrs. Norris.

"I just heard a voice reciting a riddle. I just got a message in blood and I found a dead cat. A fucking dead cat. How do you think I'd react?" Bella demanded, glaring at the ground. Tom grabbed Bella by her arm and gripped her chin. He made the girl look up at him. He snarled at her and Lockhart's eyes widened.

"Anastasia, I swear to Merlin and beyond that if you don't stop being a moron, I'll smack you down through the seven fiery pits of hell" Tom swore as Bella pulled away from him and glared at him. Tom's lips curled into a smirk at the sight of her usual disregard for authority.

"Fine!" she snapped and Dumbledore finally looked up at the sobbing Argus.

"She's not dead, Argus" he said, quietly.

Everyone looked at him with wide eyes. Everyone except for Tom looked very confused.

"Not dead? But why's she all stiff and frozen?" demanded Argus. Tom sighed and rolled his eyes.

"She's been Petrified" Tom and Dumbledore said at the same time. Lockhart nodded and leaned casually against Tom's shoulder. He placed his hand on Tom's other shoulder. Tom looked down at him in disgust. Bella rolled her eyes and pushed Lockhart from Tom before taking her place beside the DADA teacher and standing half behind him.

"That's what I thought" Lockhart exclaimed. He cast Bella a dirty look and she only awarded him with a smirk while Dumbledore ignored Lockhart.

"But how I can't say..." Dumbledore said. Bella knew he had his suspicions but didn't want to share it in front of some teachers and the trio.

"Ask them!" Argus shrieked, pointing at Bella, Ron, and Hermione.

"We didn't do this! No second year could do this! And why would Bella do this when the message was addressed to her?" Hermione shrieked. Everyone was on the last bit of his or her nerves. Argus shook his head.

"No! You saw what she wrote on the wall. Threatening an imaginary person! And writing the enemies...she must have figured out that I was a Squib" Argus said. Bella trembled before hissing. The temperature in the room grew colder.

"I AM ANASTASIA SLYTHERIN! My name is Bella Anastasia Slytherin-Black-Potter. Someone found out!" Bella snapped in anger. Snape's eyes widened, maliciously.

"If I might say, Headmaster, Potter and her friends may have been in the wrong place at the wrong time. However we do have some suspicious circumstances. Why was she in the corridor at all? Why wasn't she at the feast?" Snape asked, cruelly. Tom's knuckles turned white and crimson was slowly seeping into his eyes. Bella looked into Snape's dark and empty eyes.

"Hermione and I got into a fight. Even when we fight, we don't separate. That's just the way we are. And then...I heard the voice" Bella said. Hermione and Ron nodded in agreement.

"Could you all hear the voices?" Snape questioned as Hermione and Ron glanced at each other, uncertainly.

"No...but we've come to trust Bella about this kind of stuff" Ron defended. Hermione nodded in agreement.

"Bella heard the voice. She said it was telling her a riddle that she had to answer, Because...well...someone who I suspect is somewhat of a seer told her task in life is to solve riddles" Hermione said, quietly. Tom didn't give any reaction on what was said and Bella nodded in agreement.

"Could you repeat the riddle for us, Miss Potter?" Snape challenged. Bella blinked and then her face went blank.

"The riddle was...it was...I can't remember" Bella lied. Everyone looked at her with wide and alarmed eyes. Hermione sent her an alarming look before taking a step back. Snape's eyes glittered.

"What do you mean you can't remember?" he demanded. Bella glared at him.

"I said it in English. I'm pretty sure I wasn't speaking in Parseltongue. I don't remember" Bella snapped. Snape's eyes glittered in triumph before glancing at Dumbledore.

"I suspect, Headmaster, that Potter isn't being completely truthful. It might be a good idea if she was deprived privileges until she is ready to talk. Maybe taking her off the Gryffindor Quidditch Team will make her speak" Snape suggested. McGonagall came to Bella's rescue.

"Really Severus? The cat was not hit over the head with a broomstick. There is no evidence that says that Miss Potter really did something" McGonagall said. Bella nodded and Snape looked over at Dumbledore.

"Innocent until proven guilty" Dumbledore clarified causing Snape looked absolutely furious. Filch looked just as angry

"My cat has just been Petrified! I want to see some punishment!" Filch shouted. Dumbledore placed a calming hand on Filch's arm.

"We will be able to cure her, Argus. Professor Sprout has just received some Mandrakes. As soon as they are full grown I will have potion made to revive Mrs. Norris" Dumbledore promised. Lockhart nodded.

"I'll make it! I must have done it a hundred times. I could whip up a Mandrake Restorative Potion in my sleep" Lockhart butted in. Before Snape could say anything Tom rounded in on Lockhart.

"Would you shut up? Severus will make it. He is the Potions Master of the school" Tom said, simply.

"Thank you, Riddle. I suppose your little brat is safe...for now" Snape said, icily. Bella glowered at the man and shook her head.

"You are a soulless bastard" she hissed. Tom looked down at her and smirked before pointing towards the door and then Nagini.

"Nagini, go with her" he commanded. Nagini slithered over to Bella and Bella gestured towards the snake as it wrapped itself around her. Bella turned to Dumbledore. His ice-blue eyes were twinkling and made her feel like she was being X-rayed. She winced in pain as she felt something knock against her mind with force before looking away. Dumbledore gave a small smile.

"You may go" Dumbledore said. Hermione, Ron, and Bella left the office, quickly.

They walked silently up towards the staircase. They finally spoke when they were out of any of the professors' earshot.

"Do you think I should have told them the riddle?" asked Bella, quietly. Ron shook his head.

"No. Hearing voices no one else can hear isn't normal. Not even in the Wizarding World" Ron said, quietly. Hermione nodded in agreement.

"And I have a feeling it's you who is supposed to answer the riddle. Anyway, the writing on the wall was weird. What's the Library of Corvus? It wasn't in Hogwarts, A History" Hermione pointed out. Ron looked at her in surprise.

"It's a wizarding fairytale even if it takes place in Hogwarts. It has all the knowledge of the world. It has the future and the past. A lot of people have tried to find it but apparently there's a key to it. The key is to answer three riddles thrown your way that has to do with you, personally. It's all about self-enlightenment and stuff" Ron said. Bella looked at him in shock before nodding in agreement.

"I remember that story! Uncle Sirius used to tell me stories about that! I don't remember the old story but there was a warning at the end saying that there was another way in. There's also the fact that if your will is strong enough, you can open it. But only with incredibly Dark magic," Bella said. Hermione gasped.

"But who has that type of power?" Hermione asked. Bella grimaced as the answer didn't come to her. Grindelwald wasn't strong enough

to do that yet if he was only a spirit who could possess bodies that weren't even his.

"I don't know..."

...

A/N: So...I finished that chapter and you can have it. I'm trying to get the Library of Corvus arc finished so I can move onto Prisoners of Azkaban. That's going to be the most fun. And I remember someone complaining about Bella not being cool enough. And Hermione...she's going to be in for a wild ride in the next one. So, I'm just trying to finish off fixing Bella's psyche before moving on to Hermione and then I can't WAIT until Goblet of Fire! Romance finally starts!

Chapter XIII

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 4th of November 1992

12:30 PM

Bella sat in the library with Ron and Hermione after lunch. She had shoved an egg salad sandwich sandwich down her throat. She hadn't been able to get a more filling lunch since Snape was obviously depressed that she hadn't been expelled and had made her stay behind to scrape tubberworm guts off the table.

"I'm still eight inches short!" complained Ron while he was measuring his History of Magic essay. Bella snorted and rolled her eyes.

"Write big. I finished that ages ago Ron" Bella laughed causing Ron to glare at her and pointed an accusing finger at Hermione. Hermione looked up sensing Ron's glare and she looked at him unimpressed.

"You're influencing her. Let me read your composition, please" Ron begged causing Hermione roll her eyes and shook her head before growling at the large book on the table in front of her. Bella raised an eyebrow.

"What's got your knickers in twist, Mione?" Bella asked. Hermione shot her a look before sighing and leaned back, her eye twitching in annoyance. Bella snickered. It reminded her of Tom's twitch.

"I looked in Hogwarts, A History, and there was no mention of the legend of the Library of Corvus!" complained Hermione. Bella and Ron exchanged notes before breaking out into laughter. Hermione just looked at them indignantly.

"Hermione! It wouldn't be in Hogwarts, A History" Ron laughed, heartily. Madam Pince hushed them and it quieted their laughter only a little.

"And why not?" she asked, reproachfully. She was obviously annoyed that they had disturbed the quiet of the library with their loud laughter.

"Because...the Library of Corvus is just a fairytale, darling" Bella giggled. She froze and closed her eyes as she a familiar prescence. She tensed, waiting for the hand to settle on her shoulder. Ron frowned.

"What's wrong, Bella?" Ron asked. Bella shook her head, as she didn't feel the long fingers settle on her shoulder and it was unnerving her a bit. She stood quickly and Ron stood along with her. Bella sighed, knowing it'd be hard to get away from Ron.

"Er...nothing. I have to go get a book. It'll only take a couple minutes" Bella said. Ron looked at the girl cautiously.

"Do you want me to go with you?" he asked. Bella sighed at him being overprotective. She didn't mind when Tom did it. It felt right then but when Ron did it, he just seemed overbearing.

"No. I'm fine. I can deal with the sneers and glares of my classmates, Filch, and Snape" Bella sighed. Ron nodded, slowly and cautiously before sitting down. Bella walked off, following the call of his magic. She ended up hanging over the rope of the Restricted Section. She could see him leaning over his book and her eyes widened when she saw he had reading glasses on and couldn't resist the urge to smirk.

"So, the big and bad Lord Slytherin needs glasses" she teased Tom didn't even look up but she could see his lips curl in amusement.

"And the Girl-Who-Lived got her eyes fixed partially by a potion when she was nine years old. She used to be blinder than a bat and still wears contacts to this day."

Bella's eyes widened and she looked at him in shock. No one but Sirius and her old primary school friends knew that. She remembered when she was younger how she had the ugliest pairs of glasses she had ever seen. They lenses were circle shaped and framed in black. The lenses had been thick and she couldn't stand them. Thinking about them reminded her how she looked before and she flinched.

She had been the geekiest looking child in all of London. She used to wear her hair in pigtails and her glasses covered half her face. She was shy and closed off and used to read as many books as Hermione. She was all together awkward but after she had gotten rid of her damned glasses she had opened up more and became friends with almost everyone.

"How the bloody hell do you know about that?" Bella demanded, annoyed. She brushed her wild black hair behind her ear and raised an eyebrow. Tom smirked in amusement at her shock and annoyance.

"Oh, Black might have shared a few stories of you when we escorted you around Diagon Alley. Quite amusing to think of you as an awkward child who wore trainers and Muggle clothing at all times until you were seven" Tom said, smugly. Bella glared at his amusement she didn't wear Muggle clothing much anymore. She always wore robes over them.

"Well, I'm not a Muggle. I liked to fool myself into believing I was one of them when I was younger and don't pretend you didn't" Bella snapped. Tom's expression darkened ever so slightly and Bella frowned at the change.

"Yes, well run along with your little friends. I'm sure they're awaiting you...most likely behind that bookcase over there" Tom said, gesturing towards the large bookcase behind her. She scowled at it before shrugging and turning back to him. She leaned on her hand as she contemplated her next words.

"Do you know why the people who opened the Library of Corvus are targeting me?" she asked, gently and quietly. Tom looked back at her sharply and he scowled, his eyes narrowing.

"No but I'm quite curious on how you forgot the riddle so quickly" Tom said as his scowl began to relax. Bella knew that they were moving into dangerous territory and she couldn't tell him. For some reason, she knew that the riddle was hers to find out and no one else's.

"I'm not sure. I was hoping for a normal school year this year and I guess I went a little...weird...when I saw the writing on the wall, I

think in all of the excitement I forgot" Bella lied, rather weakly at that. Tom seemed to notice and he gave her a honest to God grin that made her blink in surprise.

She could also hear Hermione and Ron's gasps. She rolled her eyes at the bookcase and turned back to Tom.

"Anastasia, if you're going to lie, lie well."

"I'm not lying!" Bella lied, quietly. Tom gave her a smug smile now, much more subdued than his grin from before.

"Yes, you're not lying. You're simply making a fabrication of the truth for fear of what anyone would say if they found out, that indeed you know there was something more to that message. In short lying...because you're afraid" Tom said, pointedly. He sounded almost teasing. But somehow, Bella knew that he wasn't teasing her. He was trying to get it out of her.

He was trying to manipulate her.

"I'm not afraid. Why would I be afraid to tell anyone something as important as this? Someone is threatening the school. Why wouldn't I tell an adult?" Bella asked in monotone. Tom tilted his head and inspected her carefully. Bella tried her best not to flinch at his scrutinizing gaze.

"Fine. Did you read the books I gave you for your birthday?" Tom asked. Bella nodded, carefully, as she dissected what he was saying.

"Yes, I did. I translated the Parseltongue book into English for Hermione. It was very good. The scrolls I'm still trying to decipher. During the winter holiday, I was thinking about going back to the vault for other books" Bella said and she noticed Tom didn't look too alarmed.

"I see and what did Miss Granger think of her gift?" Tom asked, smoothly. He looked at her, carefully.

"She actually liked it quite a bit. She's a little obsessed about war. She seems to take a thrill in all things battle related, verbal or otherwise."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Wednesday the 4th of November 1992

1:00 PM

The class settled down in front of the ghost of Professor Binns. He began with the usual droning on of boring notes. Bella stared out of the window, falling asleep right then and there. Binns could make even Quidditch boring. Bella couldn't understand how Hermione found all of this interesting enough to take notes on.

"As you know the Goblin Wars began in—" Binns started Bella snorted before nodding in understanding.

Ah, that was why Hermione and her weird fascination with war and battle and just blood all together. She never questioned it, though Ron found it strange. Bella found it endearing and just one of Hermione's very strange quirks.

Hermione suddenly raised her hand and everyone looked alert. Binns stared at her in utter amazement.

"Yes, Miss...er..." Binns said. Bella smirked internally. He couldn't remember any of his students' name. He was a completely inadequate teacher. For goodness' sakes, he was freaking dead. You couldn't get less sufficient than that.

"Granger, Professor. Sir, I'm a Mudblood so I was wondering if you could tell us about the Library of Corvus" Hermione said, in a clear voice. Everyone continued to stare at her. They couldn't get used to her using the word 'Mudblood'. Bella, personally, was proud of Hermione turning the slur into something that defined a person purely on how proud they were of their heritage.

"My subject is History of Magic. I do not teach fairytales or legends of any kind" Binns said sternly before continuing.

"The Goblin Wars made a huge impact on the economic system of the Wizarding World—"

"Sir in all honesty, I don't give a bloody damn about the Goblin Wars" Bella piped up. Everyone turned towards her and Binns looked at her with narrowed eyes. Hermione glanced at Bella through the corner of her eye. Bella's lips turned up into a mischievous grin, when she saw Hermione's obvious disapproval.

"Sir, I think Bella is trying to say that all legends have a basis in fact. I do enjoy hearing about the Goblin Wars and history, but sir in light of the circumstances..." Hermione manipulated, subtly. Binns nodded and sighed.

"Oh, very well. The Library of Corvus...I remember the tale well. You all know that the four greatest wizards and witches of the age founded Hogwarts some thousand years ago. Godric Gryffindor, Helga Hufflepuff, Rowena Ravenclaw, and Salazar Slytherin founded it. They built this castle together and molded their magic into each every stone until it came alive into what is known as Lady Hogwarts, the great House of Magic. As people pass through the wards into Lady Hogwarts, their magic only strengthens the castle even more" Binns stated.

Everyone was listening to his every word for a change and he seemed confused by the sudden attention. Nonetheless, he continued with his story.

"Anyway, for a few years, the four founders worked in harmony, seeking out youngsters to train in the ways of magic. They each valued different traits. Gryffindor valued the brave and the nerving. Hufflepuff always found hard workmanship as the best trait of a person. Slytherin favored those who were cunning and sharp. However, Rowena Ravenclaw, found that intelligence and knowledge was important above all."

"Rowena was known for her wit and strategy. Those who came to her always knew that she had the answer. Rowena was a Seer but not by birth. Her gift of knowing was coveted. But, it was unnatural. While Slytherin was feared for the ability to speak to snakes, Ravenclaw was feared for her knowledge and sharp eyes. And when she knew she was nearing her time, she supposedly built the Library of Corvus to store her never-ending knowledge. Soon, Rowena became depressed, for unknown reasons and her time neared faster. In the end, she sealed the Library of Corvus and set an all-knowing creature as guard before going to her deathbed."

"According to legend, one who could open the Library was powerful. No one has been powerful enough to open it thus far and if one should, a powerful knowledge will be washed over the people. It is like Pandora's box and the one thing locked in that Library is hope. For if one should have that type of knowledge...all hope would be lost" Binns finished, dramatically. Bella frowned. That hadn't been the story she was told when she was younger. The story she had been told used to chill her to the bone.

"So, there really is a Library of Corvus?" Hermione asked, excitedly. Everyone was excited at the prospect of knowing all things. Bella couldn't help but be tempted by the thought. However at the same time, the idea repulsed her. No should have that type of knowledge if they hadn't had it in the first place.

"No. It's all just a legend. And no more questions! It's just a story" Binns snapped when other people decided to try and protest. Bella was lost in her thoughts as Binns launched into another lecture on the leader of the rebellion in the Goblin Wars.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 6th of November 1992

8:00 PM

"Shouldn't you be resting? You've got a Quidditch game tomorrow" Ron urged. Bella gave him a patient look but read the scrolls she got for her birthday, carefully. Ron was leaning over her shoulder. Hermione sat across from her caught Bella's eyes. Bella rolled them and Hermione muffled a giggle.

"I'm fine, Ron" Bella answered, after realizing that he was obviously waiting for an answer. Ron nodded in understanding.

"I'm just worried about you, Bella. I see you as a sister, and Weasleys are protective of their own kind" Ron said, kindly. Bella smiled. Hermione smirked and inclined her head towards Gideon and Ginny, who happened to always be in the common room. Luna Lovegood was with her for once.

"Some Weasleys see her as a little more than that. Gideon's got an awfully big crush on you, Bell" Hermione pointed out. Bella nodded, her smile fading slightly as she looked out of the window at the inky sky.

"I know. People tease me about it all the time. Frankly, it's embarrassing. I can't stand when people do that. He doesn't even know me," Bella sighed in annoyance. Hermione smiled and turned to look at Gideon.

"Bella. He's staring at you again" Hermione said. Bella looked up, sharply and Gideon was staring at her with his friends. Bella smirked at him and he turned redder than his hair. Ginny and his friends burst into laughter. Ron snorted and Bella turned back to Hermione.

"Now, he's not" Bella countered, playfully. Hermione rolled her eyes and shook her head.

"You shouldn't tease him like that" Hermione answered. To Hermione's intense surprise, Bella sighed and nodded. She shook her head and glanced at Gideon.

"You're right. I shouldn't and I'm not. Ron, why does your brother even fancy me?" Bella asked, curiously. Ron tilted his head as his face screwed up in concentration. The expression had Bella snorting in a unladylike manner.

"He's always liked you, I think, since he was little. After your birthday party he raved on and on about how pretty you are and how amazing and smart. It got bloody annoying after a while. I think George and Fred taped his mouth shut. And then Ginny talked about how you were the best person in the world" Ron said, chuckling at the memory. Bella sighed and looked over at Gideon.

"See, Mione he doesn't know me. I've never met anyone who really knows me. Well except for Sirius and..." Bella started. Her eyes widened when she remember what Tom had told her two days ago.

"And who?" Ron asked in curiosity. Bella glanced up at Hermione through her eyelashes and shook her head.

"And no one. No one at all. Anyway, Gideon doesn't know me watch. Gideon! Come here for a moment!" Bella shouted across the

common room. Gideon turned at lightning speed and was striding forward, just as fast.

"Yes, Bella?" Gideon asked as soon as he sat down. He shoved Ron over so he was sitting directly in front of Bella. Her lips curled into a cruel smile of amusement.

"What's my favorite breakfast food?" Bella challenged.

"Porridge with mounds of sugar" Gideon answered immediately. Bella's mouth fell open in shock.

"How did you know that?" Bella demanded. Gideon blinked but didn't answer back. Bella frowned and sighed before asking another question.

"Favorite Muggle candy?"

"Red Vines."

"Favorite Amy Mann song?"

"Red Vines."

"Favorite way to say red wine in a German accent?"

"Red Vines."

"Favorite lunch food?"

"Kreacher's treacle tart, even though that's not even a lunch food."

"What's my favorite dinner food?" Bella challenged she felt annoyed that he actually knew this useless stuff about her, especially the Red Vines crap. She was addicted to the stuff though she tried not to eat it in front of Hermione. Hermione's parents were dentists...

"Steak-and-kidney pie" Gideon answered, smugly. Bella's eyes widened as she came across the perfect question.

"Favorite colors?"

"Emerald and midnight blue" Gideon said, confidently. His eyes were glimmering and he was obviously happy that he had Bella's full attention. He started when Bella's face suddenly held a wicked smirk, reminiscent to the one of his least favorite teacher in the entire school.

"Wrong. It's crimson and charcoal" Bella answered. She tensed as she realized what she just said. She felt the scrutinizing gaze of Hermione on her but she threw it off. Gideon frowned.

"No...I remember Ginny asking Ron. He said emerald and midnight blue" Gideon said, slowly. Bella shrugged before sighing.

"My second favorite color changes every other week. But...crimson never changes. Remember that for next time. One last question" Bella prompted. Gideon looked at her, raptly as if she were giving an important lecture for an upcoming exam.

"Yes, Bella?" he asked.

"What is my dream?" Bella asked. Hermione's eyes widened. Gideon's eyes lit up.

"To save the world and marry into the Weasleys?" Gideon said, hopefully. Ron snorted and erupted in laughter. Hermione giggled but Bella's eyes were serious.

"Wrong. It's to find my family. My true family, not my parents, but Hermione and the others" Bella whispered. She turned away and looked out at the sky. Gideon leaned forward and placed his hand on her arm. Bella's head snapped back to look at him and Gideon recoiled. Hermione's eyes widened and Ron yelped. Everyone turned to look at them and flinched.

Bella's eyes were crimson.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 7th of November 1992

11: 00 AM

Bella walked onto the Quidditch Pitch, snapping gum in her mouth. Her usually wild hair was pulled in a ponytail. It fell down her back and Bella hadn't bothered to actually comb it. She knew that it would get messed up in the wind. They met the Slytherins half way across the pitch.

"On my whistle. One, two, three..." Hooch said before blowing the whistle. Bella swung her leg over the broom and spiraled upwards, higher than anyone. Her gum was pushed to the top of her mouth as she spiraled up. The overcast sky opened up to reveal rain.

"All right there, Princess?"

Bella turned sharply in the air to see Draco Malfoy smirking at her. She sneered at him and shrugged.

"I'm fine. How are you, Mummy's little dragon?" Bella teased. Draco turned red and Bella laughed. She had just guessed what his mother called him. It was amusing.

"I'd love to chat but I think I see something gold. See you around, Malfoy" Bella sighed. She was bluffing, expecting him to follow. As she took off, swooping between the stands, he was right on her tale. Bella cursed under her breath.

He was good. He obviously had some training. She ducked under before looking up in surprise. She could see the gold glint in the rain and she grinned. She turned around and saw Malfoy's face upturned towards the sky.

He had seen it too. He went up just as fast as she did.

Suddenly, she stopped.

I am round, I am fast

I unseat all.

What am I?

Bella looked around in shock before something big and brown sped towards her and hit her straight in the chest. Draco stopped

moving as everything moved in slow motion. Bella fell back and she locked her legs. She hung upside down and everyone stared up at her.

"Anastasia! Get back up!" Malfoy urged in concern. Bella looked at him in shock but couldn't help but listened. She climbed back up and as soon as she was seated properly, Malfoy rushed up. Bella looked around and suddenly something struck her in the side.

She heard the shattering of her bones before she felt the pain.

She let out an agonized scream. Hermione shouted in shock. She glanced around and Hermione gaped when she saw Professor Riddle. His face wasn't in its usual arrogant expression. His lips were pressed together in a thin line. He was even paler than usual, bordering on unhealthy looking and he was gritting his teeth together.

"What happened? She just screamed" Gideon said, worriedly. Hermione sighed. He was concerned for her but Riddle looked absolutely stricken. Riddle looked ready to...ready to die.

"I think...I think it shattered her arm" Hermione whispered. Gideon and Ginny looked at her in shock. Luna nodded, sagely.

"It did. She's feeling a lot of pain. So is he. But it's only emotional pain" Luna said, knowingly. She looked back up, quietly before blinking, owlishly. Hermione sucked in a breath.

"But she'll be okay. She'll be okay, right?" demanded Ron. Luna surveyed Ron for a long moment without saying anything. Ron was quickly becoming uncomfortable under her gaze.

"She will be fine for now."

Bella was in the air, screaming in pain. Her screams came out in short pants as the bones shifted in her skin with every move. Her arm felt as if it were just thrust into the hottest oven. But she knew she had to get the Snitch before Malfoy. She let it drop to the side of her body. It smacked her arm and she gritted her teeth to avoid another scream.

"Potter, what the hell are you doing?" demanded Malfoy as they raced upwards. Bella's vision was quickly turning black as she

neared the Snitch. She raced up, before wrapping her legs around the broom before removing her hand and catching the Snitch. As her fingers wrapped around the gold ball, her eyes rolled into the back of her head and she went limp.

Hermione screamed with the masses when Bella began to fall. Suddenly, Riddle was up and his wand out. He waved it sharply, snapping something in anger before Bella flickered and completely disappeared. She reappeared on the ground where she seemed to be coming to. Riddle walked, briskly down with a lot more pep in his step than Hermione expected. Hermione got up and dragged Ron down with her. Gideon and Ginny were trailing after but Luna stood where she was, her eyes fixed on Bella on the ground.

Malfoy landed clumsily before rushing over to Bella. He leaned down, just as Tom got over. Tom pushed him out of the way and knelt beside Bella. Lockhart was just behind him.

"Professor, will she be alright?" asked Hermione, anxiously. Tom looked up with deadly crimson eyes.

"I don't know yet. Anastasia, wake up" Tom murmured, his tone softer than usual. Bella blinked before glancing around and her eyes fell on Lockhart who had drawn out his wand.

"Oh, no, not you!" she moaned in pain. She jolted as another spasm of searing pain shot from her arm and ran down the length of her body.

"She doesn't know what she's saying" Lockhart said, soothingly. Tom was actually on his knees next to the girl. And his eyes were wide.

"Anastasia, can you sit up, for me?" Tom asked in a soft voice. Bella shut her eyes, tightly and cleared her throat. She struggled to sit up until she was leaning on one hand and she looked at him with eyes dark with pain.

"This hurts like a bitch" Bella snapped. Tom gave a little hissing laugh before lifting his wand and touching it to her arm. Lockhart stumbled forward.

"I can do this. I've done this a hundred times" he said. He flicked his wand and Bella felt a strange sensation run up her arm. The pain had stopped running up her arm and she didn't feel shards of bones poking at her muscles any longer. Actually, she didn't feel like she had an arm at all. She looked down as it fell limply. Tom picked it up with his a hand and it flopped over. He looked up at Lockhart with crimson eyes. Bella glared and their eyes blazed the color of hellfire.

"T-that happens sometimes" Lockhart stammered. Tom looked down at Bella who turned green as she realized what would have to happen now.

"I never realized how much of a total moron you were? Merlin, Professor Riddle probably wants to murder you!" Hermione snapped. Lockhart looked at her in surprise.

"Miss Granger, I don't think that was necessary. To—" Lockhart started. Hermione's eyes turned pitch black but it wasn't her that answered. Draco sneered at Lockhart, righteously.

Someone approached from the left.

The Slytherin boy stood next to Hermione. She didn't turn around.

"I swear to God, Lockhart...I have a healthy respect for authority. So, I won't tell you all the things I want to tell you in front of Professor Riddle, but I swear on my magic if you raise your wand to Bella ever again, I will destroy you" Hermione vowed, dangerously. The magic stirred heavily in the air as the oath began.

"Witnessed. Witnessed by the Dark House of Malfoy" Draco swore. The Slytherin nodded.

"Sealed. Sealed by the Dark House of Zabini" Zabini said. Bella's eyes narrowed and nodded.

"Bound. Bound by the Dark Housssse of Black and Sssslytherin" Bella hissed. Hermione nodded once. The oath burned onto her arm in the form of a long sword, running from her shoulder to her wrist. The color of the tattoo was red. Hermione smirked in satisfaction.

"So mote it be in the name of the Apocalypse. Witnessed, sealed, and bound."

...

A/N: So, here is the next chapter. I had fun writing the last scene. Hermione's temper is going to get her in trouble. And I can't wait to write about it. It's going to happen in their fifth year, so after the romance happens and stuff. It'll probably happen in the summer before or after fifth year. I haven't figured it out yet...or it might be in third year. Depends on when I get to it.

Chapter XIV

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 7th of November 1992

12:30 PM

"She should be punished! She threatened a teacher and made an oath against him! This is an outrage! She should be expelled! As well as Miss Potter!" Snape sneered. He looked pale with anger yet in his usually soulless eyes, there was a hint of smugness. Hermione stared at the teachers in front of her without dark and heavy lidded eyes as they all were in the Hospital Wing since Hermione had refused to leave Bella's side.

"Then you would have to punish your own students as well, Severus. This is not a one way street" McGonagall pointed out. Snape gritted his teeth and shook his head and Bella grimaced in pain as the Skele-Gro did its work.

"Before we hand out punishments, we should get down to the bottom of this problem, I believe" Riddle suggested. He was sitting on Bella's other side. Bella was absently tugging on his robe sleeve. Ron was sitting with Hermione. They were the only students in the room at that point in time. Hermione sighed and looked out the window. She didn't want to talk about it.

"Yes, Tom I believe that is also the way to go. Miss Granger. Why did you swear that to Professor Lockhart?" Dumbledore asked. Before Hermione could answer the question, Lockhart intervened.

"Yes, Bella forgave me. Was there a point to giving the oath if I forgiveness was already given?" Lockhart said. Bella rolled her eyes but didn't respond at all. She grimaced in pain again and slumped against the pillow.

"She didn't forgive you! And why would she? You made the bones in her arm disappear with a spell that wasn't even real!" Ron protested. Everyone glanced at Lockhart in surprise except Riddle and the children. Lockhart looked chagrined.

"You're just a second year. You wouldn't know any of the particularly dangerous medical spells that I do. And as I said before, it happens sometimes. Right, Anastasia?" Lockhart asked using the nickname Bella's friends and Riddle called her. Hermione's patience ended with that particular name.

Hermione's eyes turned darker than ever and she stood up, pointing an accusing finger at Lockhart. She lifted her head up into a haughty manner that made everyone old enough to remember the First War freeze.

"Shut your mouth! How dare you speak that name? You dare besmirch that name with your filthy mouth?" she hissed in anger. Bella blinked, owlshly, reminiscent of Luna for a moment. Bella grabbed Hermione's arm and pulled her down to sit back next to her.

"It would be prudent for you not to call me that, Professor Lockhart. A handful of people have permission to use that name. You are not one of them" Bella said, coolly. She gritted her teeth but a moan of pain escaped her lips. Lockhart nodded and Dumbledore looked at Hermione in understanding.

"The oath cannot be broken without being released by the three houses it is bound to and the expressed regret of issuing the oath from Miss Granger. I don't believe that will be happening, will it?" Dumbledore asked, his eyes twinkling. Hermione tilted her head and then shook it. Hermione didn't flinch as she felt Dumbledore's eyes probing her.

"Sir, are you looking for the mark of the oath?" Hermione asked, curiously. Dumbledore's eyes twinkled and he allowed a small smile.

"I am. Could you please show me...if it is in an appropriate place, that is?" Dumbledore requested. Hermione shed her robe and rolled her up her shirtsleeve to her shoulder to expose the long red tattooed sword. Bella traced it in fascination and Dumbledore looked at it, carefully.

"I don't know what the sword is. It looks faintly familiar. What is it?" Hermione asked, quietly.

"That is the ancient symbol of War."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 8th of November 1992

8:00 AM

"Hey, Gideon! Are you paying attention? Oh...she walked in" teased one of Gideon's friends. Gideon looked back at the muggleborn, Christine Jackson who had been speaking to him. Michael Brown, the younger cousin of Lavender, laughed when their group of friends turned to look at as Bella Potter entered the Great Hall.

Gideon gaped at the girl. She was wearing a flattering outfit. Her legs were covered in blue skinny jeans and she wore her usual black combat boots. Her crimson silk shirt was loose at the sleeves but tightened around her wrists. Her usually wild black hair was tamed. She wore a black robe over her outfit. And for once, she wasn't flanked by Hermione or Ron. Instead, a snake followed her on the shoulders of Gideon's least favorite teacher.

"It's Riddle" Gideon spat. Christine smirked at her best friend. Ginny snickered and Michael looked confused.

"What's so funny?" Michael asked. Christine glanced at Bella who was smiling fondly at Riddle.

"He's angry because Bella has the biggest crush on Riddle" Christine said. Gideon glared at the teacher. Riddle grabbed Bella by her wrist and pulled her back through the door and Bella had a large grin on her face. Riddle was hissing at her.

"That's not why! He's ancient and annoying and he hates me! And Bella does not fancy Riddle!" Gideon snapped. Christine shrugged and Ginny giggled again.

"He doesn't look ancient. He's actually what most of the female population would describe as gorgeous. He isn't annoying at all unless you're talking about him hating you. And he hates you because you're always stalking his ward. Everyone knows that he's her magical guardian. It's creepy, Gideon" Christine explained. Michael nodded in agreement and glanced back at the door. Bella had just wandered back in with a grin on her face. The giant snake was wrapped around her.

"Hi, Gideon" Bella smiled as she sat down next to the group. Hermione was smirking down the table. Ron looked surprised as if Bella had done something they had never expected.

"B-Bella...why are you sitting with me...er...us?" Gideon asked in shock. Bella shrugged and pressed her lips to the giant snake's head.

"Isn't that Professor Riddle's snake?" Michael asked, quietly. Bella's eyes widened and a crimson ring bled from her pupil slightly. She nodded and brushed her face against the snake.

"Yes, this is Marvolo's pet. Marvolo is Professor Riddle, if you're wondering. He's not very happy with me, right now. He's actually very pissed off at me. There he is..." Bella said, her grinning growing wider as Riddle walked down the aisle she was seated at. Bella's face flew forward, turning to complete shock.

"You're an utter moron, Anastasia" Riddle growled. Bella scowled at him and shrugged before sighing.

"Do you expect an apology of some sort?" Bella asked. Riddle leaned in before giving a sharp nod. Bella leaned forward with a grin and tilted her head before giving an innocent look.

"I can promise you, you won't be getting one" Bella promised. Riddle leaned down and leaned down before smacking the base of her neck. Bella jolted forward and she looked at him in surprise. Gideon watched in annoyance. It had looked like Riddle had just shocked her! His Bella!

"You need more respect for your elders, brat. No more library for you."

Riddle pulled back slowly, his nose skimming across Bella's neck. Only Gideon seemed to catch the moment. Bella hissed in annoyance before turning back around and glaring at Riddle, defiantly.

"See if I give a damn..." she muttered. She turned back to the younger children. Bella's green eyes were luminescent in righteous

anger. Michael leaned forward. He was a gossip and he obviously wanted more information.

"What's he angry at you about?" Michael asked. Bella's eyes snapped back to him and Michael almost flinched at the intensity.

"I can't say. That's what I told him. He asked a question and I couldn't answer him. He's very angry with me. Well, I'll see you guys later" Bella murmured. She got up and glanced at the Slytherin table. Christine's hand shot out and grabbed Bella by the wrist and Bella looked down.

"Bella, what do you think of Professor Riddle?" she asked, curiously. Bella laughed at this and rolled her eyes.

"I absolutely detest him."

Gideon tried his best to believe her. He really did but...

He couldn't.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 8th of November 1992

7:00 PM

Bella stared in shock with the rest of the students, staring at the stairs. Hermione was grasping Bella's arm. Madame Pomfrey stood at the stairs with Dumbledore and Tom. They were staring at the still body of Colin Creevy.

There was so much blood. Bella couldn't tell if he was dead or not. She just knew his chest was half torn up.

"Another attack, its worst than last time. What's happening?" asked Pomfrey. Dumbledore glanced around slowly, as if contemplating of what exactly he was going to say.

"This means that indeed the Library of Corvus is open. These are claw marks. The creature guarding the Library clawed at him before Petrifying him. There are dark forces at work" Dumbledore said. This sent a shiver down Bella's spine. She looked around, for a message.

"Is there another message?" asked Tom, as if thinking exactly what she was thinking. Dumbledore tilted his head and looked down at Colin Creevy. He nodded before bending down and unclenching Colin's hand around his camera. He opened it and removed a picture. He looked over it before his eyes widened. He passed it to Tom.

"Invisible to all.

Translucent I am.

I hide from Death and I hide Death.

What am I?"

Bella flinched, as she knew it was directed at her. She turned away and cleared her throat. Hermione hid her face in Ron's shoulder. Ron looked grim-faced, which was unusual for the usually cheerful Weasley.

"But...by who?" McGonagall asked. Dumbledore blinked.

"The question is not who. It is how" was his only response. Bella closed her eyes and took Ron and Hermione's hands and dragged them down the hall. They passed Ginny and Gideon who looked absolutely distraught. Bella shook her head and sighed. They were fellow first-years with Colin.

They turned the corner and entered a deserted corridor and she spun around. Bella's eyes were wide in alarm and she looked absolutely panicked.

"I...it's directed to me! I know it!" gasped Bella. She began to hyperventilate and Hermione and Ron looked at the girl in surprise. They had never seen Bella lose her composure so suddenly. Bella was usually a sassy, fast-talking girl who challenged anyone. Now, she just seemed so scared. Their leader was breaking and fast. So, it was their job to make sure she stayed together before she shattered.

"Bella, calm down everything is going to be fine. We're going to figure this out. I'll owl my parents and tell them that I am staying for

Christmas. Stop hyperventilating," Hermione urged. Bella shook her head and closed her eyes.

"No! You don't understand! You've never heard the fairytale...oh God!" Bella moaned. Ron nodded and cleared his throat.

"It's a very Dark fairytale. And it doesn't end well, Hermione but Bella, we've got your back. We're going to stop this but we're going to help you figure out the riddles first. How many have you heard now?" asked Ron, curiously. Bella glanced up at him through narrowed eyes.

"Two. I've heard two. I've got two more to go" Bella whispered. Hermione glanced at them, curiously.

"I thought you said there are three" Hermione said, quietly. Ron nodded and looked down almost nervously.

"I think it's time we tell Hermione the story."

"I agree Hermione come on. We've got to find somewhere quiet" Bella said, taking a deep breath to center herself. She closed her eyes and glanced back up. Hermione nodded and looked around.

"We should go to the library. No one will be there now it's almost dinner anyway" Hermione suggested. Bella nodded in agreement and the trio made their way to the library in silence. No one wanted to disturb the tense quiet. They were too scared to speak anyway. Bella had never felt as if something this important had depended on her. It would've been different if it were something less dangerous. Like a giant snake of some sort a basilisk maybe.

But no, it had to be knowledge. Knowledge was the most dangerous weapon of all. It was sharper than any sword, stronger than any spell. And just as deadly as the Killing Curse, which had taken her parents.

"We're here we need to find the book" Bella said. Hermione nodded and tilted her head.

"Where do you think it would be?" Hermione asked. Ron looked around and pointed towards the back.

"The unedited version would be near the back near the Restricted Section" Ron said. Bella nodded. The group made their way through the dark and vast room. Bella felt safe here. A familiar feeling was draped over her and she basked in it. Her safety was ensured here, she was sure. They browsed the shelves before Hermione made a sound of amazement. She pulled down a large tome. It was dusty and the pages were yellowing but it was the book of tales that they needed.

"The Old Tales of Beedle the Bard" Hermione murmured. She sat down on a plush chair near a fireplace. Hermione pointed her wand at the damp wood and cleared her throat.

"Incendio."

Fire crackled into being from her wand and gave them a warm light. Hermione opened the book and looked down at it before flipping through the pages. She landed on the tale and glanced up.

"The Forgotten Tale' why is it called that?" asked Hermione. Bella raised an eyebrow at Hermione before remembering that the girl had been raised in the muggle world. She may know how to make an oath but she didn't know everything.

"It is called 'The Forgotten Tale' because it was not included in the mainstream edition of the book. The Old Tales of Beedle The Bard are all of the tales he wrote when he was still alive. It was this massive compilation that got simplified years later. It was pushed out in favor of 'The Tale of Three Brothers'," Bella explained. Hermione nodded before looking down.

"There was once a wizard and a witch who were traveling in the lands of Scotland. And they wandered upon a glorious castle built by four powerful sorcerers. The castle's name was Lady Hogwarts, and Lady Hogwarts was in mourning for it's four creators had died not two hundred years previous to the time of this young witch and old wizard. This witch and wizard were most intelligent and had heard of Lady Hogwarts and what waited inside" Hermione began. She passed the book to Bella. Bella leaned over it and skimmed the words before taking her turn to read.

"And what waited inside were four things: a chamber of secrets, a cup of unknown origins that was said to be the Holy Grail by mortals,

a sword of utmost power, and a library of all knowledge. These two magical beings were full of ambition and cunning and thus they chose to travel to the library of all knowledge, bypassing the other three powerful objects.

The elder man was corrupt in being while the younger witch still seemed to have a hint of innocence in her soul and that was enough to even access Lady Hogwarts.

However, before allowing them access, a powerful beast had been given instructions from its former lady to give three tests to reveal their true selves. And so it tested the elder wizard first.

The beast asked its first riddle.

'I am felt but never seen,

I break but never fall apart,

I may feel lost, but I am never gone.

What am I?'

The old man was obsessed with finding the answer to the riddle. All he knew was power and so that was his answer. The beast tore him apart into pieces for answering incorrectly. She then feasted on his flesh, leaving clean and white bone in his piece. The young witch was frozen in horror and couldn't believe what she had just witnessed.

The beast repeated the riddle to the young witch and the young witch knew what it was referring to.

'My heart' the witch suggested. The beast let her pass to the next corridor as she led her closer to the Library of Corvus. As they went to the next door the beast stopped the girl and addressed her again" Bella ended. She handed the book to Ron and Ron looked down at it curiously.

"I cause wars and rebellions.

I am wanted by you, but denied as well.

I taunt you who cannot have me.

I am found in history, but my opposite is found even more.

What am I?'

'Freedom' the witch decided. The beast nodded, wisely before they continued to the next door. The witch assumed it was the last. The beast asked the next riddle.

'I'm always here.

You see nothing else.

When, you look in my face

I will look you in the eye

And never lie.

What am I?'

'My reflection' the clever witch said. The beast stopped and looked at her with soulful eyes before it widened. Underneath the innocence was a cruelty and she couldn't allow that to access her mistresses' knowledge. And thus she asked one more question.

'I am decided.

I am set in motion.

I am finality.

I will find you.

I am a kin to death.

What am I?' asked the beast. The witch glared at the beast before giving a stomp.

'Knowledge! Give it to me! It's mine!' she shouted, her true colors showing. The beast's eyes widened when she realized she had misjudged and attacked the witch.

The beast tore the witch apart with no mercy before sealing the Library of Corvus with the powerful magic of Lady Hogwarts. And went into a deep slumber, waiting to be awakened to confront the next pursuer of knowledge" Ron read. He passed the book back to Bella

"But listen close and listen well. Where there is Light, Dark dwells. These forces of shadows shall wander through the night. But Magic in its purest form can lead you through the endless abyss and gift you with a pure Sight. But remember this, those who seek what shall not be seen, darkness does not always equate to evil, just as light does not always bring good" Bella finished.

Hermione looked up at Bella in shock.

"That's not that Dark" Hermione said. Bella glanced at Hermione and shook her head and cleared her throat.

"Think about it, Mione. Two people were torn apart! Did you not see Colin's chest. It was ripped apart and it was this beast! This is dangerous!" Bella snapped. Hermione nodded in agreement and tilted her head.

"Well, we need to solve your riddles so that doesn't happen to you. It's okay if you're scared, Bella. You can admit it" Hermione said, soothingly. Bella glared at the muggleborn girl and Hermione didn't even flinch.

"I'm not scared!" Bella snapped. Ron looked at his stubborn best friend with unfathomable eyes.

"But, Bella...you are."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 18th of December 1992

7:00 PM

"Look, they're starting a dueling club! The first meeting is tonight" Seamus Finnigan said, pointing out the parchment on the notice board that was right outside of the Great Hall.

"I wouldn't mind dueling lessons. It could come in handy one of these days" Dean Thomas said. Ron snorted and glanced at them.

"You think Ravenclaw's beast can duel?" asked Ron, though he looked interested as well. Seamus glanced at Ron and shrugged.

"It looks interesting, is all" Seamus said, as if Ron had hit the mark. Hermione and Bella exchanged looks. That had wanted to spend time deciphering the riddles but they both found it interesting. Bella loved dueling, no matter how much she denied it. Hermione may have had a larger spell repertoire but Bella put more force behind her spells, thus making them damaging.

"Do you want to go?" Ron asked as they entered dinner. Bella bit her lip and sighed. She was torn, torn between dying without finding the answers to the riddles and dueling.

"I don't know, Ron...she has to find the answers to the riddles" Hermione said, worriedly. Ron gave Bella a pleading look.

"Come on, Bella. You love dueling. I know you do" he said, reminding her of her love. Hermione crossed her arms and glared at Ron in annoyance.

"Ronald! You know more than anyone that she has to find the answers to the riddles. Would you rather her die? She can go after she finds the answers. I can't believe you would suggest her to go some club. We'll go the library at lunch. You can go to the dueling club on your own Ron" Hermione snapped. Bella giggled at her bitching before looking at Hermione.

"But Mione, I haven't dueled in so long. Did you know that I had a tutor when I was younger? I don't get to duel as much. Please?" Bella begged. Hermione looked at her in shock before crossing her arms.

"Bella, I can't believe you're unconcerned for yourself. You would rather duel than prevent your death? I should've known! You never have your priorities straight. You know what? Do whatever the hell you want!" Hermione said, harshly. Bella's eyes narrowed and she glared at Hermione in rage.

"You know what? I don't give a flying fuck what you think, Hermione! I'm tired of you trying to be my mother! I haven't had a mother for eleven damn years! I don't need one now! So stop trying to be her!" Bella yelled. The Entrance Hall quieted down, slightly as everyone turned to look at Bella. Hermione stared at the girl with wide eyes before harrumphing.

"Fine! We'll go to the stupid dueling club" Hermione hissed. Bella nodded but didn't say a word as she stormed into the Great Hall. They sat down and the two girls didn't speak a word to each other.

Bella had talked to Ron about Quidditch all the way to eight o' clock, when the Dueling Club meeting began. Soon, most of the students in the school surrounded a dueling platform.

"I wonder who'll be teaching us" Hermione said. Bella finally turned to the girl before clearing her throat.

"It might be Flitwick. I heard he's a dueling champion. I would love for him to teach me" Bella said. Seamus nodded, as if he had overheard the talk when he had really been eavesdropping.

"Or it could be Professor Riddle. He's one of the greatest wizards on the planet" Seamus suggested. Bella grimaced at the thought.

"Well, as long as it isn't...oh no!" groaned Bella as she saw the wizard that had stood up on the platform. Gilderoy Lockhart was grinning at the group. His robes were a bright plum and the greasy and sallow Severus Snape followed him. Everyone was silenced as he took the stage.

"Gather around, gather around. Can everybody see me? Can everybody hear me? Excellent!" Lockhart said. Snape looked like he didn't want to be there but he was forced to. Lockhart continued.

"Now, Professor Dumbledore has granted me permission to start this little dueling club, to train you all in case you ever need to defend yourselves as I myself have done on countless occasions – for full details, see my published works.

"Let me introduce my assistant, Professor Snape," said Lockhart, flashing a wide smile. The girls giggled.

"He tells me he knows a tiny little bit about dueling himself and has sportingly agreed to help me with a short demonstration before we begin. Now, I don't want any of you youngsters to worry – you'll still have your Potions master when I'm through with him, never fear!" Lockhart continued. Bella snorted and the people surrounding her glanced back at her in confusion.

"We should be worrying that there won't be body parts from Lockhart flying. Snape's pretty good at dueling. Uncle Sirius told me. They went to school together" Bella explained to Ron and Hermione. They nodded in understanding.

"But wouldn't it be great if they finished each other off?" asked Ron. Bella looked at Snape. His lip was curling in disgust as if he wasn't against the idea of hexing Lockhart into oblivion.

"Yeah but I doubt Lockhart can even perform a real spell" Hermione sighed.

Lockhart and Snape spun to face each other. Snape jerked his head in what was supposed to be a bow. Lockhart dipped into a bow with a bunch of flourishing hands. They stood up and Lockhart held his hand wand lazily. Snape actually looked ready to fight.

"On the count of three, we will cast our first spells. Neither of us will be aiming to kill, of course" Lockhart said. Hermione chuckled, darkly.

"I wouldn't say that..." Bella said, quietly. She stared at Snape who looked absolutely murderous. Lockhart finally got into a loose and confident combative position.

"One—two—three."

"Expelliarmus!" shouted Snape. A red jet shot from his wand and hit Lockhart in the chest. Lockhart was blasted back and he flipped over before landing on his back.

Malfoy and the Slytherins cheered for their Head of House. Snape looked over at Lockhart, smugly.

Lockhart stood up dazed.

"Is he alright?" Lavender Brown squealed.

"Who gives a damn? That prat deserved it!" Bella snarled. Everyone looked at her in surprise but they knew she was always in a darker mood nowadays.

"Well, there you have it!" he said, tottering back onto the platform. "That was a Disarming Charm – as you see, I've lost my wand – ah, thank you, Miss Brown – yes, an excellent idea to show them that Professor Snape, but if you don't mind my saying so, it was very obvious what you were about to do. If I had wanted to stop you it would have been only too easy – however, I felt it would be instructive to let them see. Now, we'll call individual pairs onto the platform. Miss Potter!" Lockhart said, sensing Snape's murderous glare. Bella walked up onto the platform.

"Hermione, come on" Bella insisted. Snape held up a hand.

"I don't think so. Mr. Malfoy, can join you" Snape insisted. Bella shrugged and placed both hands onto the platform before flipping onto it, her combat boots hitting it hard and echoing in the quiet. She strode confidently to the middle and waited for Malfoy walk on.

"Wands at the ready When I say three, disarm your partner. Only disarm" Lockhart said. Bella smirked at Malfoy.

"Scared, Princess?" Malfoy asked, loudly. Bella leaned forward, her pupils rimmed with crimson. Her irises were rimmed with the hellfire color as well. Bella grinned, crazily.

"You wish, Thanatos" she challenged. Malfoy's eyes widened and Lockhart began to count. He had only reached two when Malfoy had flicked his wand.

"Reducto!" he shouted, pointing at the floor she was under. Bella jumped from the spot and skidded across the floor, gracefully. Lockhart watched in shock.

"I said disarm only!"

"Confringo!" Bella shrieked. It hit Malfoy in the chest and he was blasted back. Malfoy spun up, gracefully. He aimed his wand at her.

"Affligo!" he snapped. Bella felt the invisible punch be made to her stomach and she wheezed as it knocked the breath out of her. She fell to her knee before looking up with completely crimson eyes.

"You're going to regret that, Malfoy! Castreo!" she hissed. Everyone flinched as they saw Malfoy grabbed his crotch and fell to the ground with a short squeal. Bella smirked, victoriously. It was wiped off quickly when Malfoy looked up with a burning desire for revenge in his eyes.

"No, it is you. Who will regret it...Anastasia. Serpensortia!" he shouted. Bella reeled back as a large anaconda emerged from the jet of blue that shot from his wand. Everyone stumbled back and Bella watched in horror as it looked around.

"Don't move, Potter. I'll get rid of it" Snape said, finally intervening in what he had probably seen as entertainment. Lockhart pushed forward, intent on redeeming himself.

"Allow me!" Lockhart shouted before giving his wand a flourish. It launched the snake in the air and when it landed, it was enraged. It hissed, warningly.

"How dare you, you stupid humans?" it hissed. Bella stared at it in shock as it rounded on Hermione and Justin Finch-Fletchley. It hissed and slithered up to them and Hermione was frozen.

"I COMMAND YOU TO STOP!" Bella hissed in Parseltongue. It felt like the world froze as the anaconda stopped in its tracks and turned to Bella.

"You are a speaker?"

"I am. I am Bella. Please don't attack them. She's my...she's my sister" Bella said, quietly. Snape moved forward, wide-eyed, pointing his wand at it.

"Vipera Evansesca" Snape said. The anaconda burned into nothingness. Everyone stared at Bella in shock. Justin looked horrified and afraid.

"What are you playing at? You're Anastasia Slytherin, aren't you? Aren't you?" he shouted for everyone to hear. Bella said nothing.

"ANSWER THE QUESTION!" someone shouted.

"I-I don't know what you're talking about" Bella stammered. Her mind was racing but her heart was beating faster.

"Yes you do. You're Anastasia Slytherin! You're a Parseltongue! I heard you speaking to Professor Riddle in Parseltongue in first year!" Malfoy shouted. Bella blinked and glared at them.

"I..." she started.

"Save it! You're a liar! You're a Dark witch!"

"You're no Savior!"

"You're not the Golden Girl!"

Bella clamped her hands over her ears and her eyes turned into slits. They flashed dangerously red and she shook her head. She fell to her knees as the shouts got to her. She glanced at Snape who was looking at her with a smirk. Hermione and Ron looked horrified.

"YOU'RE EVIL!"

The last shout struck Bella to the core. It had been Draco who shouted it. And that made it hurt even more. She stood up and hissed, making the students go silent.

"I'm a Parseltongue, fine! I AM ANASTASIA SLYTHERIN! The attacks are my fault! They're coming after me! OKAY, I'VE SAID IT! I've admitted it! But I'm not evil! I swear!" she shouted. Draco smirked at her in triumph.

"That's not what they see. Welcome to the dark side, Lady Slytherin."

...

A/N: DAMMIT! I forgot my Author's Note. So...I'm really liking the Hermione I'm creating. But not more than Bella. Bella may seem Light as of now but...I'm not done with her character. Hermione's character is really getting there. Once I reach Order of the Phoenix,

I'll have her. Speaking of Order of the Phoenix...I've got a brill idea.
But it cannot be shared. But you'll definitely be in for a surprise!

Chapter XV

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 19th of December 1992

9:00 AM

Bella sat in the library with Hermione and Ron while they were trying to decipher the riddle and they were pleasantly undisturbed. Well unpleasantly for Bella her dark hair was wild and dark circles could be seen around her eyes. She looked like she hadn't slept at all and she hadn't.

All night she had been kept awake by Lavender Brown and Parvarti Patil. They had been constantly harassing her with questions if she was related to Tom and if she really was the reason the Library of Corvus was opened. No one seemed to understand that it wasn't her fault. They gave her looks of distrust and actually took different corridors to the Great Hall if they saw her walking down one.

Someone had actually asked Hermione why she was hanging out with Bella if she knew she was going to get hurt. Hermione had threatened to break the boy's arm if he ever approached her with a stupid question like that. Bella smiled at the memory of the boy's pale face.

Her mood soured when she glanced at the corner of the library.

"Bella, pay attention we're trying to discuss...oh" Hermione said, after seeing where Bella had been looking. A group of Hufflepuffs were sitting at the far end of the library, glancing at Bella every few seconds.

"I can't deal with this...I have to tell Justin that it hadn't been my fault. I was trying to stop it. I didn't mean...I didn't mean to make this happen. I don't even know how this is happening," Bella whispered, brokenly. Hermione placed a comforting her hand on Bella's arm.

"I know you didn't mean to Bella. You were trying to save me, weren't you? It was an anaconda. It would've killed us" Hermione whispered. Bella nodded earnestly and got up. Ron looked at her alarmed.

"Where are you going?" Ron asked. Bella pointed over to the group of Hufflepuffs. The Girl Who Lived squared her shoulders and took a deep breath. She could do this.

"I'm going to ask where Justin is. I don't give a damn what they think of me" Bella snapped. She stood up and walked towards the Hufflepuffs and hid behind the bookcase they were next to, trying to hear their conversation.

"So anyway, I told Justin to hide in our dormitory. Potter is dangerous. Everyone around her is getting hurt. The Library of Corvus is a fairytale and I remember it well. The beast is going to ask her those three riddles and she's got to answer them right, and with every passing moment that she doesn't answer them, someone's going to get hurt, and the only people getting hurt are muggleborns and squibs. You saw her egging on the snake to Justin and Granger. She was trying to make sure that the beast marks them instead of going after her. No one's lived this long without answering the riddles" Ernie Macmillan said. Bella's mouth fell open.

"So, you definitely think it's Bella who is Anastasia Slytherin?" Hannah Abbott asked. Ernie gave her a disbelieving look and shook his head.

"Over course she is! She said so! She's obviously evil if the beast of Rowena Ravenclaw marked her out! All Slytherins are evil, no matter what Dumbledore says" Ernie said. Hannah looked at him, earnestly.

"She's so nice if a little headstrong and she destroyed Grindelwald. She can't be bad" Hannah said, quietly. Ernie shook his head.

"No one knows how she survived that attack by Grindelwald. I mean to say, she was only a baby when it happened. She should have been blasted into smithereens. Only a really powerful Dark witch could have survived a curse like that!" Ernie said. Bella pushed herself from behind the bookcase and cleared her throat. The two looked up at her, terrified. The other three with them looked as they had just been petrified.

"I'm not even really related to him. Get your facts right and stop being gossips. It's not kind at all I already said I wasn't trying to egg

on the snake. So where is Justin?" asked Bella. Ernie and Hannah glared at her for eavesdropping. Bella glared back and Hannah cowered. She reeled back but Ernie looked at her suspiciously.

"What do you want with him?" Ernie asked.

"I'm going to tell him what happened. I know how to control a snake. I have Nagini wrapped around me half the time. She's like a fucking leech. She's always on me and she's never attacked anyone before" Bella pointed out. One of the Hufflepuffs scoffed at the explanation.

"That's because Professor Riddle trained her" she said. Bella hissed under her breath and the blood drained out of all of their voices.

"Professor Riddle's snake is fucking vicious. I've had my fair shares of having to restrain her from attacking various students so piss off. Tell Justin that I've got to talk to him when you see him" Bella sighed in anger. Ernie scoffed.

"Don't count on it, Slytherin!" Ernie snapped. Bella reeled back as if she'd been slapped and she sighed.

"That...that's not even my real name. I'm not even the true Heir of Slytherin. That's Professor Riddle if you weren't aware" Bella said, sadly before walking away. Hannah watched with wide eyes.

"She's right..." Hannah said after the girl. Bella trudged back over to Hermione and Ron who looked at her, sadly.

"How'd it go?" Ron asked. Bella could tell that it he already knew that it hadn't gone well from her grim expression. Bella blinked, slowly before sitting down and glancing at her friends.

"Er...not so well. They have a fucking excuse for everything" Bella snapped. Hermione placed her hand on Bella's arm. Luminescent emerald eyes found dark chocolate brown eyes.

"Temper, temper" Hermione warned with a smile the teasing made Bella giggle. Bella glanced back at the girl she considered as a sister. Hermione could always cheer her up when she was down.

"I'm tired of all this. Can we just go to the Common Room or something?" asked Bella. Ron nodded in agreement.

"There are too many books it's making me tired it's just like Binns' lectures" Ron said. Bella nodded in agreement and looked at Ron in awe.

"I completely agree! The Goblin Wars are so damn boring."

"NO THEY'RE NOT!" Hermione exploded. Everyone turned to glare at Bella before they realized it was Hermione that had disturbed the peace. She seemed to realize as well. The well read Muggleborn blushed to the roots of her hair.

"SHHH! You're going to have to leave" Madam Prince said, crossly. Hermione flushed even darker at the fact that she, the bookworm of the school, had been kicked out of the library. She slammed her book closed before walking out in long strides with the books pulled against her chest. Bella and Ron hurried after her.

"Sorry Mione, I didn't mean to get you kicked out" Bella said, sounding innocent. This was disproven by the wide and amused grin on her face. Ron was making regular intervals of letting out snorts.

Hermione suddenly let out a shriek and Bella and Ron looked to where she was looking. Bella let out a bloodcurdling scream that had students bursting from their classrooms. Justin Finch-Fletchley was on the ground. His eyes were wide with terror in his eyes. Words were carved into his chest. Under the words was Grindelwald's mark carved into her skin.

A connection to the heart of Victory.

Stolen from souls

Fashioned from tree

Created by the Claimer.

What am I?

"I'm going to die! I'm going to die!" Bella shrieked as she began to hyperventilate. All of the students and teachers felt the air shift and the magic swirl around Bella. Bella's hair swirled around her. An unnatural wind picked up to swirl the hems of some students' robes.

Anastasia Slytherin...

Three down...one to go.

The words had Bella shaking as the magic slammed into her binding the three riddles to her soul. Bella shook as the ancient magic swirled around her, released from Lady Hogwarts. The magic was binding her but...it was still strangely comforting.

Like a mother who had to give her child medicine because they were sick...

She fell to the ground and began to shallow breaths, as if something was choking her.

"Marvolo...Marvolo..." she choked out. Hermione nodded and turned to a pale faced Professor McGonagall.

"Professor! I need to find Professor Riddle. Please watch her" Hermione begged. She didn't wait for a response. She took off running down the halls. She jumped over the banister and slid down the stairwell rails. As she was approaching the first floor, she jumped over it and landed crouched. The students wandering the halls stared at her in surprise as she discarded her robe and ran forward. She wore only her trousers and white shirt.

It was as if she was flying down the hallways. She pushed herself and she could heard the goading in her head. She could hear the voices telling her to go faster if she wanted to save her. And if she couldn't save her, she wasn't the most loyal any more. She reached the hall where the Defense Against the Dark Arts classroom was located in. As she made her way down she suddenly slid.

She skidded down the hall until she was in the DADA room. She threw the door and it banged into the opposite wall. Shocked eyes found her panting stature. Professor Riddle was teaching a group of sixth years. They stared at her in shock. Professor Riddle stood up, his eyes unfathomable.

"She got the third riddle. The castle bound them to her soul. She...she's been exposed to such ancient magic. I don't think she can take it anymore. The magic is so pure, it's tearing her apart"

Hermione cried, hysterically. Everyone shivered as the room went cold and the flat surfaces were suddenly covered in frost. Riddle's eyes shifted to crimson in seconds and he withdrew his wand.

"Miss Granger, I thank you for the alert. It's time that Bella told me what the damn riddles were. Dismissed!" Riddle hissed. He walked with Hermione, quickly and everyone cowered as he strode forward, venomously.

When they reached the area where Bella was, the headmaster was already there and leaning over her. Riddle flicked his wand and Bella flew towards him. She was on her knees about a foot away from him. He walked closer and yanked her to her feet. She was staring down with dark emerald eyes. He grabbed her by the chin and made her look up. Her eyes were blank and she was shivering every other second.

"Anastasia, speak the riddles" Riddle instructed. Bella giggled, softly. She looked up at Riddle with the eyes of Victory.

"I'm becoming obsessed with the riddles. You know I think about them all the time. Now...I'm going to die because of them" Bella whispered. Riddle glared at her and shook his head.

"You won't."

"I will. But I'm fine with that. It should keep me out of your hair, no. And it doesn't matter. You know what must be done to stop all of the attacks. I must fight...or die. Headmaster...I believe you wanted to see me in your office," Bella said, hoarsely. Her eyes were still strangely blank and she wasn't all there. Dumbledore nodded, gravely.

"Yes. Students return to your classes. Tom, please move Justin to the Hospital Wing. Miss Granger, Mister Weasley, return to the Gryffindor common room" Dumbledore said. Hermione scoffed and stepped forward.

"With no disrespect, sir, I go with Bella everywhere and what you say will not change that. Ron will go to the library. Take the book and read it. Find anything that has to do with the riddle. We'll make the first move. Go" Hermione instructed, unfathomably. Her voice held no emotion and Ron shuddered at that. She wasn't being a

bossy know-it-all now. She sounded like a general of an army. Ron took the book and walked back to the library. Hermione grabbed Bella's hand.

"Darling, it's going to be fine. I promise" Hermione said, quietly. Bella looked at her with tired eyes and shook her head.

"No it won't. Come on" Bella said, walking towards the Headmaster's office with Dumbledore by the side of the two girls. Dumbledore couldn't understand how they had such a close relationship. Dumbledore had thought that Bella would be closest to Ron since they both shared so many interests. And she seemed to hold some ill feelings for Gideon. That messed up his plans. They were supposed to be together. Gideon was impenetrably Light and would make sure she would never stray. However that didn't seem the case. No matter. That could be changed. They were only eleven and twelve.

Then...Hermione had been so much Darker. Dumbledore knew he was taking a chance in accepting her to Hogwarts. Something was wrong...Dumbledore couldn't exactly put his finger on it but there was something. Hermione looked to Bella as if Bella owned her and it was strange. Yet...she was a bossy know-it-all, that made sure Bella did what she was supposed to.

"Sir, do you enjoy lemon drops?" Bella asked. Dumbledore nodded in surprise. How had she known...

"Lady Hogwarts tells me things" was Bella's mysterious answer. The group turned to the stone gargoyle that guarded the staircase to Dumbledore's office.

"Lemon drops" Hermione said, quietly. The gargoyle jumped from the staircase and they made their way up the stairs. When they got into the office the two students took a seat in front of Dumbledore.

Bella smiled at the phoenix on the stand next to Dumbledore. She stroked it, quietly and it cooed at her.

"Hello there. You gave the feather in my wand, right?" she murmured. Dumbledore's eyes widened even further at her unnatural knowledge. It wasn't like Rowena Ravenclaw's all knowing but it was unnatural all the same. It seemed that she genuinely had

a connection to Lady Hogwarts or...an unnatural connection to her wand. Both were dangerous things to have in a war torn world.

Hermione began stroking the phoenix just as Bella sat down with a serious face on.

"Miss Potter, can you tell me what happened?" Dumbledore asked. Bella looked up at Dumbledore with half-dead eyes. She looked like she hadn't slept in years. She looked dead.

"I had been looking for Justin, to explain to him what had happened. I'm not even related to Slytherin. Professor Riddle is my magical guardian. The Hufflepuffs I spoke to accused me of giving the beast sacrifices in place of my life. I stormed out, angry, with Ron and Hermione...Mione, you're going to burn yourself" Bella said, without looking from Dumbledore. Dumbledore looked at the Muggleborn just as Fawkes burst into flames. Hermione giggled, manically, her fingers dancing through the flames before she pulled her fingers from it.

The ends of her fingers were charred.

"Did that not hurt?" Dumbledore asked, quietly. Hermione shrugged.

"I have an affinity for fire. I'm very skilled at fire spells."

"As I was saying, Ron, Mione, and I were walking down the stairs and Hermione screamed. She saw Justin body. I screamed as well and I read the last riddle. They are all bound me now and I must answer them before I get the last riddle. I have no idea what the answers are" Bella said, monotonously.

"Bella, is there something you wish to tell me?" Dumbledore asked, coaxingly. He needed to know the riddles. He had to find out if they were what he suspected. But he couldn't if she wouldn't even tell him the first riddle.

It was impossible to get inside her now with the iron defense she had around her mind in the form of some version of herself. Something that Tom had told him pulled at his mind but he couldn't quite recall what it was.

Bella's lips spread into a lipless and crazed grin that almost made Dumbledore shudder. It reminded him of Grindelwald's Heir's smirk. That Lord Voldemort.

"Nothing, absolutely nothing at all."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 24th of December 1992

11:00 PM

Tom...did you remember anything about what the beast is?

No, I didn't. I don't quite remember anything about it, actually. I've read of the Library of Corvus in passing but didn't look too into it. I was busy.

I see...I need help.

And what do I get if I help you?

Stop being an ass...I really need your help. It's life and death.

Did your boyfriend forget your anniversary or something?

You're a total ass! No and I don't have a boyfriend. I was just given three riddles from the Library of Corvus and I don't know what they're about. I'm going to die if I don't figure them out.

I see...would you like to relay the riddles to me? It's not like I can tell anyone.

Sure. The first one:

I am cold and hard. I bring those not solid.

I bring those alive yet their spirits have ascended from this world.

My heart is cracked in half yet I live not.

I am the stone of the riverbed.

What am I?

Interesting...I may have some knowledge of what that is but I can't be sure.

The second one:

Invisible to all.

Translucent I am.

I hide from Death and I hide Death.

What am I?"

Continue, Bella. I may have some idea of what you're talking about.

That's good. The third one, I just received a couple of weeks ago.

A connection to the heart of Victory.

Stolen from souls

Fashioned from tree

Created by the Claimer.

What am I?

Bella...do you not have any idea what this may be?

None at all but something tugging at the back of my mind. I don't understand.

...Ask your best friend, the Mudblood...start with the third and work your way back. She'll understand.

But where...I'm being watched. Everyone thinks it's my fault.

I see...Bella, you're part Slytherin. Figure it out.

I'm not really a Slytherin you know...just in name.

Part Slytherin, nonetheless. Figure it out.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Friday the 25th of December 1992

8:30 AM

Bella looked in the mirror as she brushed back her long black hair. It wasn't in wild tangles that day. It was Yule. She would never go outside of the dorm on Yule with messy hair. Her long hair wasn't in a plait but fell down her back in one sleek sheet of black. Bella's crimson robes had to be reworked now that she was taller and it was longer and just as beautiful.

Hermione's bushy hair was pulled into a plait. Her Yule robes were different this year. She was taller as a thirteen-year-old. Her long brown hair was pulled into a beautiful plait. She wore a high collared white robe and a navy jacket with wide sleeves. She slipped her wand up her tight white sleeves.

"I love your necklace, Bella. Who sent it?" Lavender Brown asked. Parvarti nodded in agreement. She was wearing traditional Indian robes. This told Bella that she was a pureblood. However, Bella was surprised that they had decided to speak to her. They had opted to ignore her since the Parseltongue event. She supposed since it was Yule, they were going to be at least conversational. Bella decided to grant them the same.

"My uncle Sirius" Bella smiled as she stroked the necklace she had gotten from last year. She had opened her gifts and had grinned at all of them. They had been so sweet, especially the stuffed dog from Sirius that he had recovered from her vault, but she had stuffed Tom's gift under her bed for the time being.

"That's so sweet!" Parvarti squealed. Bella grinned to herself. At least some people didn't treat her all too different.

"I know. Well, you two have a nice Yule" Bella smiled. They nodded and walked out of the door and down the stairs. Bella turned to

Hermione with a sharp look on her face before pulling a gift from underneath the bed.

"What's that?" asked Hermione. Bella glanced at Hermione before deciding to answer Hermione. Before, she hadn't been entirely sure if she could trust Hermione. But after knowing her for more than year, she knew that Hermione wouldn't betray her for anything.

"This is from Marvolo. The dress robes from last year were from him as well. I'm going to open it now" Bella said, quietly. Hermione nodded before Bella carefully unwrapped the parcel.

"What is it?" asked Hermione.

Bella pulled from the parcel a locket. A beautiful locket, she noticed. The locket was octagonal and looked amber within. Set in the amber were green emeralds that spelled an 'S'.

And next to was a note.

Protect this with your life. I only trust you.

But if you make me repeat that to your face, I'll smack you to the icy pit of Hell.

Bella stared at in shock as she recognized what it was. Hermione didn't.

"What is it?" the Muggleborn asked. Bella glanced up at Hermione with awe on her face.

"Slytherin's locket."

:::

A/N: I have finished this chapter. It's not one of my favorites but...I'm pretty sure the next chapter is my favorite. You'll see why.

Next Chapter: Lockhart, a heart to heart, and Valentine's day (Doesn't this sound like a really bad anime title? Doesn't anyone agree that all anime episode titles are really long and give the entire plot away? Cause I think so!)

Chapter XVI

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 31st of December 1992

1:00 PM

Hermione, Ron, and Bella were in the library trying to decipher the riddles, and it was proving difficult. Everything about it was just difficult. She couldn't understand how to go about the riddles.

"This is getting so tedious! We don't have any leads whatsoever!" Bella complained and Ron nodded in agreement.

"I thought there would be a little something to go on! We've got nothing and we've been reading for months now!" Ron sighed. Hermione glanced at her two best friends, carefully. She needed to do something other than nag them, she knew it. They would just get mad at her. So, she'd say a useless fact.

"Did you know Grindelwald's sign wasn't a Rune or anything but a symbol?" Hermione said, matter-of-factly. Bella nodded, absently as she stroked the locket she had gotten for Christmas. She took it off only when she had to and when she did, she placed it in a heavily warded box.

"Yes, It's the symbol for the three gifts" Bella said, reading through the books. She felt the stillness of Hermione and Ron next to her and they were watching her with wide eyes.

"What three gifts, Bella?" Ron asked, quietly. Bella looked at him in shock. She couldn't believe he didn't remember.

"It's not important just that fairytale, the Tale of the Three Brothers. You know they were really people! The Peverells and that symbol was their coat of arms. I think I'm related to them through the Potter line...oh Merlin! Where's the fairytale book?" Bella demanded. Ron passed her the book and Hermione glanced at it.

"I hadn't even bothered to read that one! I can't believe I was so flippant about it. Read it aloud" Hermione commanded. Bella nodded.

"There were once three brothers who were traveling along a lonely, winding road at twilight. In time, the brothers reached a river, too deep to wade through, and too dangerous to swim across. However, these brothers were learned in the magical arts, and so they simply waved their wands, and made a bridge appear across the treacherous water. They were halfway across it, when they found their path blocked by a hooded figure, and Death spoke to them. He was angry that he had been cheated out of three new victims, for travelers usually drowned in the river. But Death was cunning. He pretended to congratulate the three brothers upon their magic, and said that each had earned a prize for being clever enough to evade him" Bella began. She passed the book to Ron who looked a little put out.

"What's wrong?" Hermione questioned. Ron pointed at one word in the text.

"When Mum used to read it to us, she always said midnight. It gave it a little more suspense, I suppose" Ron said. Hermione rolled her eyes.

"Well, for our purposes, its twilight. Now would you read?" Bella snapped before gesturing towards the book. Ron nodded, trying to calm her down a bit. He wasn't in the mood for one of her own moods.

"So, the oldest brother, Antioch, who was a combative man, asked for a wand more powerful than any in existence. A wand that must always win battles for its owner, a wand worthy of a wizard who had conquered Death. So, Death had crossed to an Elder Tree on the banks of the river, fashioned a wand from a branch that had hung there, and gave it to the oldest brother" Ron started. Hermione's eyes widened and she pointed down to where they had written the riddle down.

"A connection to the heart of Victory.

Stolen from souls

Fashioned from tree

Created by the Claimer.

What am I?

Don't you see? The Claimer is Death. Death claims people's lives. Bella is the victor over Grindelwald" Hermione said. Bella nodded in agreement though she was a little skeptic over the Victory thing. That didn't seem to be it. But she wasn't going to not accept what was given to her, right there.

"A wand of elder. The Elder Wand!" Bella said, in an excited whisper. As soon as the words left Bella's lips she shuddered. Bella suddenly felt a release as the ancient magic bonding that riddle to her was released. She sighed in content.

"Continue reading" Hermione instructed. Ron nodded.

" Then the second brother, Cadmus, who was an arrogant man, decided that he wanted to humiliate Death still further, and asked for the power to recall others from Death. So, Death picked up a stone from the riverbank and gave it to the second brother, and told him that the stone would have the power to bring back the dead" Ron continued. Hermione tilted her head before gasping. Bella nodded in agreement.

"I am cold and hard. I bring those not solid.

I bring life yet their spirits have ascended from this world.

My heart is cracked in half yet I live not.

I am the stone of the riverbed.

What am I?

See! It resurrects people, I expect but not really. It doesn't give them a body or anything but just gives people a spirit form. And Death took it from the riverbank. It's a stone of the riverbed. And stones are cold and hard, right?" Ron pointed out. Bella nodded in agreement and grinned.

"Yes! It's a resurrection stone. Pass the book to Hermione!" Bella said. Hermione got the large book from Ron and shook her head, in amazement. Bella felt the second riddle leave her and she could

only feel the last riddle wrapped to her magical core by a rope of ancient magic.

"I can't believe we never looked over this! I feel so stupid" Hermione sighed before she decided to read the book. Bella and Ron exchanged glances. They couldn't understand why she felt stupid. None of them had suspected anything.

"And then Death asked the third brother and youngest brother, Ignotus, what he would like. The youngest brother was the humblest, and also the wisest of the brothers, and he did not trust Death. So he asked for something that would enable him to go forth from that without being followed by Death. And Death, most unwillingly, handed over his own cloak of invisibility" Hermione read. Bella gasped and both of the other children looked over to her.

"Uncle Sirius used to tell me that Invisibility Cloaks wear out in only a few years. Mine was my father's! He's had it since he was a kid and it was passed down to him. It must be the Cloak of Invisibility!" Bella said. As Bella spoke the words the ancient magic released that riddle from her. She gasped. Hermione gave Bella an apprehensive look.

"I can understand the Elder Wand but the Cloak of Invisibility? I don't think so, Bell" Hermione said. Bella gave a smug smirk and crossed her arms before leaning back and giving Hermione a knowing look.

"Then you want to tell me why the riddle was just released from the bond that it had to my soul? I answered the riddle. It's real. We solved the three riddles!" Bella said, grinning. Hermione glared at her and sniffed before looking back down at the book. Ron snorted and Hermione gave him a glare that made him flinch.

"Then Death stood aside and allowed the three brothers to continue on their way, and they did so, talking with wonder at the adventure they had had, and admiring Death's gifts. In due course, the brothers separated, each for his own destination. The first brother travelled for a week or more, and, reaching a distant village, sought out a fellow wizard, with whom he had a quarrel. Naturally with the Elder Wand as his weapon, he could not fail to win the duel that followed. Leaving his enemy dead upon the floor, the oldest brother proceeded to an inn, where he boasted of the powerful wand, which he had snatched from Death himself, and of how it made him

invincible. That very night, another wizard crept upon the oldest brother, as he lay wine-sodden upon his bed. The thief took the wand, and, for good measure, slit the oldest brother's throat. And so, Death took the first brother for his own" Hermione continued. Bella gasped and shook her head.

"So, the Elder Wand is passed down from those that have defeated them. That's interesting to know. I would kill for a wand like that" Bella said, quietly. Hermione passed the book to Bella and the girl picked it up.

"Meanwhile, the second brother journeyed to his own home, where he lived alone. Here, he took out the stone which had the power to recall the dead, and turned it thrice in his hand. To his amazement and delight, the figure of the girl he had once hoped to marry, before her untimely death, appeared at once before him. Yet she was sad and cold, separated from him as though by a veil. Though she had returned to the mortal world, she did not truly belong there, and suffered. Finally, the second brother, driven mad by hopeless longing, killed himself, so as to truly join her. And so, Death took the second brother for his own" Bella continued. She closed her eyes and thought about it.

Her dream was to find her new family but she didn't mind seeing and speaking to her parents for only a little while. James, her father, had died defending both her and her mother. But Lily...her mother had died for her.

"But though Death searched for the third brother for many years, he was never able to find him. It was only when he had attained a great age that the youngest brother finally took of the Cloak of Invisibility, and gave it to his son. And then, he greeted Death as an old friend, went with him gladly, and, as equals, they departed this life" Bella finished. She closed the book and took the quill from the parchment before clearing her throat.

"The three gifts. The Elder Wand" Bella said, quietly. She drew a vertical line.

"The resurrection stone" Ron said. Bella drew the circle in the middle of the line and they both glanced at Hermione. Hermione pursed her lips. She still didn't think that it was exactly real but with the evidence...

"And the Cloak of Invisibility" Hermione sighed. Bella grinned and she drew the triangle over both.

"You've solved the riddles. Now, all there is to do is...wait" Hermione said, her smile disappearing. Bella's grin left her face as well and she nodded, solemnly. She glanced at the winter day.

"Yes all I can do now is wait. However I think it's time for me to go wish someone a happy birthday. It is his birthday today, isn't it?" Bella said, with a slight smile. Ron frowned in confusion.

"Whose birthday?" Ron asked. The two girls didn't answer him.

"Yes, it is. I read about it. How come you didn't know?" Hermione asked. Bella's smile became mischievous.

"Because he doesn't want me to know how old he is. Do you know?" Bella asked. Hermione's lips curled into a smirk. She did the mental calculation in her head and Bella sighed, impatiently.

"66" Hermione said, quietly. Bella's eyes went wide with glee.

"Heh...old man."

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Thursday the 31st of December 1992

1:45 PM

Tom had been calmly grading the papers for the third years. He wasn't paying any attention to it, of course. He was more concerned with his decision to give Bella his Horcrux. No matter if he had already given her one Horcrux.

But he had given her Slytherin's locket! A time before, he would rather die than be parted with it. Well...no that would be too dramatic. It would defeated the purpose of why he made the damned things anyway.

He could part with one Horcrux, he decided. He had six and that was all good and fine. Nagini was never far from him and she could kill easily. Bella would rather die than part with Slytherin's locket, he knew. His diary...when it came down to it, it was expendable. When the Chamber of Secrets opened it had been fun but he didn't need his old sixteen-year-old self running around and sucking the soul out of Bella.

Not that he hadn't explained to the diary that her soul was not his to suck out.

He sighed to himself. Here he was working when it was his birthday. He hadn't gotten a damn thing for Christmas, not that he cared. Well, that wasn't exactly true. Gellert had given him a book on the prophecy of the Four Horsemen in Elven, where it was originally recorded. That was an interesting read...that he would make sure not to let Bella see. She could be too sharp for her own good. He'd be banking on her partial obliviousness. And Dumbledore had given him a lifetime supply of lemon drops.

He hated lemon drops.

And Lockhart had left a damned letter about how he would be delivering his gift later that day. Tom wondered, constantly, how the fool had found out his freaking birthday...oh, right, Dumbledore!

There was a knocking on the door.

"Enter" Tom said, quietly. The door swung open to reveal a golden haired Lockhart. He was very tight plum colored robes and Tom frowned and his left eye twitched.

"How did you get in here?" demanded Tom. He knew he had just changed the English password...

The Parseltongue password revealed a long corridor that allowed him to get to his rooms and such. The English password allowed them straight into the office, just in case he wished to speak to a student. He'd rather speak to the most annoying student, ex. Longbottom, rather than speak to the moron in front of him.

"The password wasn't too hard to find out, my dear" Lockhart said in what he thought was a seductive tone. Tom only found it demented and that was coming from the Dark Lord.

"I think you should leave. Immediately because, honestly, I wish to spend my birthday alone" Tom said, in an even tone. Lockhart walked, forward, not even listening to him.

The Dark Lord would never admit it but he was actually slightly frightened at Lockhart's behavior. He was strictly heterosexual, not that he had any aversion to the homosexual population. Well...he only had an aversion to them when their affection was directed at him. That happened a lot.

So, now he had an irrational fear of them, at times. Like now.

"But, Tom, I have a gift for you" Lockhart purred. Tom leaned back in his seat and withdrew his wand, slowly. He concealed it as he didn't want Lockhart knowing what he was doing.

"I really don't want your gift. I hate gifts" Tom snapped, flatly. Lockhart was at his desk now and was leaning forward, over it. Tom took a deep breath, centering himself. He couldn't go off shouting Unforgiveables.

"Oh, come now, Tom. We both know that what that damned Potter girl said was wrong. We both know that you find me attractive. I mean, who wouldn't. I have won Witch Weekly's best-smile-award, five years and running" Lockhart said, flashing him his glowing smile. Tom just found it annoying. He was pissed off.

And no one lived when you pissed off Lord Voldemort. The idea of Unforgiveables, namely his signature Avada Kedavra, was sounding better and better at the moment...

"Look, Lockhart! I'm ready to tear you into a mound of bloody pieces. You will get out before I castrate you and then burn your testicles. So, you're going to want to leave. I'll give you five seconds for you to escape before I turn you into a eunuch, Muggle style. Let us begin the countdown. Five..." Tom warned, his skin pale and his eyes blazing crimson.

The illegitimate Riddle really thought at least the eyes would scare off Lockhart. But apparently, it wasn't his day since Lockhart only seemed to be aroused...if the bulge in his pants was anything to go by...Merlin, he wished he hadn't looked there. Now, Lockhart thought he wanted the little blonde ponce...oh, not Malfoy of course but the golden haired one standing in front of him.

"Come, Tom..."

"Four."

"Tom, you're not going to really kill me. You like me. I know you do."

"Three."

"Just sit down, my love, so I can give you, your present. And it's wrapped in plum purple."

"Two."

"Time to unwrap me!"

"O—" Tom began raising his wand. The tip was already glowing with a sickly green color. He knew the words and he really didn't want to have an unnecessary death on his hands...

That would make everything sticky and mess up his carefully thought up plans.

But of course, that wasn't what stopped him. Because he could make up a perfectly employed alibi on the spot. No, it was that stupid girl that could make him go into a catatonic state every time she did something that could most likely get her killed but never seemed to.

"HAPPY 66th BIRTHDAY...what the hell are you doing here?" demanded Bella Potter. She was glaring at Lockhart, who was basically draped over Tom's desk. Tom couldn't help the quip that was rising in him.

"That's my line to you. And he's leaving...before I end up doing something I wouldn't really regret" Tom warned. Lockhart looked at him with a pout before glaring at Bella in anger and annoyance.

"You interrupted a very intimate moment, little girl!" Lockhart snapped. Bella hissed at Lockhart, her pupils dilated. She walked over before grabbing him by the leg and pulling him. He fell off Tom's desk in a heap and Bella sat on it, primly with her legs crossed and looked down at Lockhart.

"Sir, I believe that you were mistaken. As has been previously stated, Professor Riddle is not homosexual. I'm sorry if you have any misconception but it is true. He doesn't appreciate his birthday gift and would love if you were gone from his private rooms. Thank you" she said formally. Lockhart gaped at her sudden switch in personality and now he only succeeded in looking very confused.

"Wha—" he started. Bella suddenly glared and he flinched back.

"Do you not understand English? Was I fucking speaking Parseltongue? GET THE HELL OUT!" she shrieked. He jumped up and looked at Tom, pleadingly. Tom looked up to the ceiling. He wasn't praying but he was pleading with any higher power out there to get that moron out of his office.

"Lockhart, get the hell out before I get a lifetime sentence to Azkaban" Tom said, almost calmly. But his voice held a tinge of edge and irony.

At this point in time, he had a few hundred lifetime-sentences to Azkaban. You could never get over the classic Avada Kedavra. It just made you feel amazing every time. Like that classic muggle book, War and Peace.

Admittedly, he loathed muggles to the point where he would rather commit genocide than ever use a Muggle contraption that they called a microwave. But...that book just held a certain quality to it...

"Fine! Be stubborn!" Lockhart snapped, pouting before stomping out like a child. Bella rolled her eyes as he left before turning slightly to glance at Tom who sat down and began grading papers. Tom could see out of the corner of his eyes the Girl-Who-Lived. She was gaping at him.

"Shut your mouth. You look like a fish" Tom said, bluntly. Bella smirked and tilted her head.

"I could imagine Dumbledore talking something like that...about fish I mean" she said, teasingly. Tom looked up at her, glaring with his charcoal eyes.

"I sound nothing like Dumbledore. He's insane. I'm not" Tom said, sharply. She shrugged and grinned.

"If you say so...but personally, I think you're both off your rocker. As, I was saying when I came in, happy birthday" Bella said, starting off teasing but her voice going softer towards the end. Tom nodded in thanks and they sat in silence like that for a while. The only sound was Tom's quill scratching on various students' essays.

"Why did you give me the locket?"

The question was so simple yet it made Tom falter slightly. He could take the more analytical route or listen to what his feelings were saying.

Eh...no, he decided. Feelings were for the weak.

"I know you would rather die than part with it" Tom said, flatly. His tone was monotonous and he intended to keep it that way. He couldn't have her going around blabbing that she had one of Tom's prized possessions.

"That's not what you said" Bella said, with a grin. Tom looked at her out of the corner of his eye before leaning back and entwining his fingers before leaning his chin on the locked fingers.

"Then what did I say, Anastasia?" Tom asked, curiously. Bella leaned forward as if telling him a great secret. Which Tom didn't understand since they were the only two in the room. Even Nagini wasn't here. She was out searching for mice he assumed...well, that was what she was usually doing.

"That you trust me. And I'm the only one you trust. Do you really?" Bella asked. Tom's eyes narrowed at her genuine curiosity. He didn't take well to curiosity since it led to questions that he really didn't care to answer.

"No. I must've been drunk when I wrote that," Tom snapped before going back to reading Katie Bell's essay.

"You just don't want to admit it! You trust me!" Bella drawled. Tom rolled his eyes and glanced at Bella.

"Would you shut up?" he demanded. She shook her head before sighing and looked up at the high ceiling.

"Does Lady Hogwarts speak to you sometimes too?" Bella asked. Tom glanced at the girl, piercingly. The question had caught him off guard. Nothing was supposed to catch the Dark Lord off guard. Damned girl messing up the status quo...

"Does she speak to you?" he asked.

"It's rude to answer a question with a question. But yes she does speak to me. Not in words but...when the riddles were bound to me, Lady Hogwarts was comforting me. I suppose that's why I find this more like a home than Grimmauld Place. I feel ungrateful that I find my home in my school rather than the home that Uncle Sirius has given me but...Grimmauld Place doesn't have this type of magic. It's so familiar to me and I don't know why..." Bella said, quietly. Tom looked at her, with shock, but not letting it show through his stoic mask.

"I see."

"You must find me a brat. I should be grateful for what I've got. I could've been left with a bunch of muggles but Uncle Sirius took me in because he loved me so much" Bella said. Tom could tell that she was more talking to herself than to him. He should've felt touch that she trusted him enough to just vent in front of him. But mostly, he just found it really annoying.

"If you acknowledge what Black has done for you, that doesn't make you a brat. Shouldn't you be with your Mudblood friend and the Weasley?" asked Tom. Bella shrugged before turning to Tom.

"Where is your home, Marvolo?" asked Bella. Tom froze and glanced at Bella before leaning back and clicked his teeth together.

"Anastasia, I think you should go now. You wouldn't want to keep your friends waiting" Tom said. Bella looked at him through her eyelashes and she was pouting.

"Do you not want to answer the question? I thought you trusted me."

"Anastasia, I trust no one."

"Why not? Didn't you have anyone you could trust when you were a child? I trust you."

"I don't trust people. I barely trust Nagini since she tried to strangle me yesterday for not getting her a mouse. Now no more questions. Get out."

Tom's eyes almost widened when Bella rounded on him. She spun around completely so that she was completely on his desk, her legs next to her as she glared at him. She leaned on her arm.

"Why are you such a total jackass? I swear you clam up every time someone asks you to answer a damn question!" she snapped. Tom tilted his head.

"Hmm..." Tom started. Bella looked at him, smugly.

"Do you get it now? Have you considered that what I just said is the truth?"

"Oh, I got it before. That is what I do. It's none of your business. My personal life is my own" Tom countered. Bella looked at him, in earnest and she pulled out Slytherin's locket. Tom could feel it thrumming with his Dark magic and the piece of his soul. He didn't think she could feel it but...

"You trusted this with me. This is Slytherin's locket and I would die to keep it safe, just like you asked. Why can't you just answer that question?" demanded Bella. Tom looked at her with angry eyes. He couldn't believe he was about to give into some little girl's whims...an annoying little girl's whims at that.

"Fine! Will you leave me alone if I answer your stupid question, little girl?" Tom hissed. Bella nodded, wide-eyed. Tom looked at the wall as he contemplated if he should lie or not.

"My home...has always been Hogwarts."

"I...I see."

"Are you going to leave now? I do have work to do. And I have to do that work if I wish to keep my job" Tom said, his tone steely. Bella smiled and slipped off his desk. She looked torn before she just walked backwards to the door. She leaned against it before grinning.

"Happy birthday, Marvolo."

She slipped out of the room, leaving Tom alone once more...

Thank, Merlin!

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 14th of February 1993

8:00 AM

"Oh my God..."

"What the bloody Hell happened in here?"

"Merlin, just kill me now."

The Great Hall was covered in a revolting shade of pink. Pink flowers decorated the walls and the heart-shaped confetti was falling from the pale blue sky. Most of the students looked absolutely disgusted.

The trio walked in, disgust on their faces. They sat down and looked at the head table. Tom looked ready to commit suicide. McGonagall had a muscle jumping in her jaw. Snape looked like he had just forced Skele-Gro down his throat. Lockhart was grinning and wearing lurid pink robes.

"Happy Valentine's Day! And may I thank the forty-five people who have so far sent me cards! Yes, I took the liberty of arranging this little surprise for you all! And it doesn't end here" Lockhart said, with

a grin. The crazy bastard clapped his hands and suddenly a dozen little dwarfs marches in with golden wings attached to their backs and harps in hand. They also wore diapers.

Flitwick looked like he was going to have a heart attack. He was half dwarf and to see his brethren looking like total morons must have been a shock to him.

"This is offensive" Hermione murmured to Bella. Bella nodded in agreement.

"My friendly, card-carrying cupids!" beamed Lockhart.

"They will be roving around the school today delivering your valentines! Even though there are no classes today, why don't you ask your teachers to show you how to teach you something in the spirit of the holiday? Why not ask Professor Snape to show you how to whip up a Love Potion! And while you're at it, Professor Flitwick knows more about Entrancing Enchantments than any wizard I've ever met, the sly old dog! And I'm sure T—Professor Riddle knows quite a few things as well," Lockhart continued.

Flitwick looked so embarrassed that he buried his face in his hands. Snape looked ready to commit murder if anyone asked him how to make a Love Potion. Tom...looked ready to commit suicide. His hand was clenched tightly around his knife and it angled slightly towards his chest.

Later, that day when Bella was walking in the Entrance Hall she was grabbed by the elbow. She looked down to see a dwarf standing there. Bella's eyes widened and she jerked away, looking up as the dwarf stalked her into the Great Hall.

"Leave me alone. Leave me alone. Leave me alone" Bella said, repeating her mantra. She looked at Ron and Hermione for help but they were just laughing into their hands as the dwarf followed her to her seat. Everyone was looking at her now.

"Bella Potter! I have a singing valentine for you. So would you listen?" a grim-looking dwarf said. Bella shook her head and looked at him wide eyes.

"Please, please, please leave me alone!" she begged. The Slytherins were laughing as she was harassed by the dwarf.

"I have to give it to you if I'm going to be paid! So shut up and listen!" the dwarf snapped. Bella moaned in horror as it began.

You're tall and fun and stellar

I wanted to buy you umbrella

Bella!

I'm the Beast to your Belle...a

I'm the Prince to your Cinderella

Bella!

I wanna be your fella

Take you out to dinner and hope you don't get salmonella

Bella!

You're cuter than that girl Stella!

Want to take you to Larissa!

THAT'S IN GREECE!

Bella, Bella, Bella Potter

Bell, Bell, Sell, Bella Potter!

"Oh and here's your Red Vines" the dwarf finished, handing her the Muggle candy.

Bella stared at the silent Great Hall with a horrorstruck expression. Draco was laughing so hard that silent tears were running down his face. Tom was shaking. He was trying not to burst out into laughter. Apparently, he felt better from that morning. He hadn't gotten any singing Valentine's. Just a good sixty-five cards that he was planning to use as fuel for his fireplace.

Bella looked around and slid lower in her seat.

There was total silence.

And then it erupted.

Laughter was everywhere and Bella was slamming her head into the table, repeatedly. Hermione was laughing just as hard as everyone else. Ron was choking on his steak-and-kidney pie.

"Merlin! I want to die!" Bella moaned. She looked around as everyone continued to laugh. She groaned in despair when she saw that even Dumbledore was laughing and he was freaking crazy!

"That...that was bloody hilarious!" Ron choked out as the room quieted down, only slightly. Bella moaned and shook her head. Hermione grinned at the girl.

"Well, you've got to admit, whoever sent that has some talent! That was a great song and the word 'Bella' is hard to rhyme with" Hermione said. Bella glared at her before ripping open the packet her candy was in before biting into the licorice.

"I already know who did it! GIDEON! YOU'RE DEAD!" Bella roared. Gideon glanced at the girl before giving her a shy yet mischievous grin. Hermione laughed again and Bella buried her face in her arms.

She spent the rest of dinner hearing renditions of what had been dubbed 'Bella's Song'.

When she reached the door several people who she actually didn't want to see met her. Namely, Tom.

"I'm sure Black will love the song, Anastasia. I have to give Mr. Weasley credit. His rhyming wasn't impeccable but he gets points for imagination. Ten points to Gryffindor" Tom smirked. Bella glared at him in annoyance.

"Go stuff it, old man."

"I am not old!" he shouted in outrage. Everyone looked at him in shock. Professor Riddle never raised his voice...oh, Bella was there. Of course he raised his voice.

"Yeah, yeah. Would you do me a favor and not send it to Uncle Sirius? I would never hear the end of it! He'll be singing 'You're tall and fun and stellar, I wanted to buy you an umbrella, Bella!' for the rest of my days" Bella sighed. Tom smirked and crossed his arms.

"You deserve it for bothering me all the time. Say hello to the West End for the rest of your life" Tom smirked before walking off. Bella growled in frustration when she was met by an unknown fourth-year who was very pretty. She had long red hair and hazel eyes and was glaring at Bella.

"What do you want? I'm not in the mood!" Bella hissed. The unknown fourth-year tossed her hair off her shoulder and sneered. Oh, Lord...she was a Slytherin.

"You are not cuter than me, you scrawny little chit!" shrieked the girl. Bella stared in shock when she stormed off. So...that was Stella. Bella turned to walk out when Hermione and Ron caught up to her.

"That was embarrassing...so, so embarrassing" Bella moaned as they walked towards the stairs leading to the common room.

"Bella ragazza!"

Hermione and Bella spun around as one. Hermione almost blushed when she saw Zabini standing at the end of the staircase with a sullen looking Draco Malfoy. He glared at them in annoyance.

"You better not be talking to me, Malfoy's friend! Cause if you're calling me to sing 'Bella's Song', I'll hurt you...muggle style. I've been told I've got a mean right hook. Maybe I can introduce it to your face" Bella snarled. Zabini looked only amused and rolled his eyes.

"You're lucky you're cute, Potter. And actually, I was talking to your friend" Zabini countered. Bella looked at him with annoyance before her eyes widened in recognition.

He had been speaking in Italian! So that's what Hermione wanted to find out what it meant...Bella smirked to herself. 'Bella' meant beautiful.

"What do you want, Zabini?" Hermione asked, coldly. Zabini gave her a roguish smile that even Bella could find endearing.

"Yeah, what do you want with Hermione?" Ron snapped, sounding territorial.

"Mind your own business, Weasley. Don't be that way, bellissima. I just wish to speak to you" Zabini said, honestly. Hermione walked down the stairs again with a roll of her eyes and she crossed her arms.

"I repeat, what do you want with a poor little Mudblood like me?" Hermione asked. Her tone was chilly but Zabini didn't seem affected by her sudden mood change at all. He leaned in until his lips were right over her ear.

"Valentines felice giorno, bellissima" he murmured. Hermione took a step back and crossed her arms.

"Impressive. Too bad I have no idea what it means" Hermione snapped. Zabini's smile turned slightly predatory. Malfoy looked disgusted at the idea that he was flirting with a Mudblood. Ron was red with anger.

"I'm sure you can figure it out. See you later, Granger" Zabini said. Bella scoffed and rolled her eyes before beckoning Hermione forward.

"Doubt it, Zabini. Hermione's got better taste than that. An arrogant little git will not hold her attention. Sorry" Bella hissed. Zabini's grin turned back to friendly and he glanced at Bella.

"Still lucky you're so damn cute, Potter. Like a little sister, of course. I prefer the brainy Muggleborn type" Zabini said, with another wink. Malfoy looked sick at his blatant flirting.

"Malfoy, please take your friend away. He's grating on my nerves" Bella requested, kindly. Malfoy nodded in agreement.

"For once, Princess Potter, I agree with you. Blaise! A Mudblood? Really?" Malfoy chastised as they walked away. Hermione turned back to her friends. Bella looked annoyed with Zabini. Ron looked pissed off.

"Who does that Snake think he is?" demanded Ron. Bella smirked at his jealousy. She doubted he even realized what it was. Hermione shrugged before walking, dutifully with the two to the Common Room.

As soon as they murmured the password and the occupants saw them, they burst into song.

I'm the Beast to your Belle...a!

I'm the Prince to your Cinderel...la!

Bella!

I wanna be your fella

Take you out to dinner and hope you don't get salmonella

Bella!

You're cu—

"Would you shut the hell up?" Bella snapped, harshly. They quieted down but the room erupted in laughter.

"Gideon Weasley..." Bella continued in a low voice. The curly-haired eleven-year-old raised his hand and sent her a grin. Bella stormed over to him and he leaned back, confidently.

"How'd you like it?" Gideon asked, cockily. Bella looked at him with a blank expression before glaring, fiercely. Gideon flinched back in surprise.

"That was the single most embarrassing thing I've ever gone through. How could you? What the hell were you thinking? That wasn't appreciated. I mean, I'm flattered but...I can't. Please don't ever do that again" Bella said, quietly. Gideon looked at her with wide eyes before nodding, solemnly.

"I put a lot of work into that. It's hard finding words to rhyme with your name" Gideon said, crestfallen. Bella pulled Gideon from his seat and guided him to a more secluded corner of the common room. The elder Weasley twins let out wolf whistles. Bella rolled her eyes and sat down with Gideon.

"Gideon, I find that all very flattering. But, I really think I should be focusing on trying not to get killed. And plus, you're only eleven. I'm a year older than you. And I'm only twelve. Mione is thirteen so it's okay with her. I don't want to die and I'm not about to endanger you. You understand, don't you?" Bella asked. Gideon nodded, sadly.

"Do you like your Red Vines?" asked Gideon, sounding rather depressed. Bella's eyes lit up and she grinned before withdrawing the pack of candy.

"It's half finished. Thanks for that! You can't find Red Vines in Diagon Alley. Anyway, Marvolo told me to tell you that the rhyming wasn't impeccable but you get ten points for your imagination. He actually awarded Gryffindor ten points. I think he mostly did it because of my humiliation but he did compliment. Which doesn't happen a lot since he kind of hates you," Bella murmured. Gideon chuckled and nodded. He looked up at the girl in earnest.

"I'm really sorry for embarrassing you" Gideon apologized. Bella laughed and hugged Gideon, tightly before backing away with a grin.

"It's all right, Gideon. It was very flattering, like I said. Thanks again for the Vines" Bella said, grinning before sitting back down with Hermione and Ron. Everyone was looking at the two with wide eyes.

"Don't tell me you like my little brother. That'd just be creepy" Ron said. Bella laughed. She knew everyone was paying attention to them. She rolled her eyes and glanced at Gideon before winking.

"Not in this world, Ron. I'm too busy trying not to die anyway. That's kind of a full-time job..."

...

A/N: This was SO fun to write. I had to implement comedy. AVPM FOREVER! I used Ginny's song and changed it around for Bella. It's

so funny. Originally I had 'I'm the Edward to your Bella'. And then I realized that Twilight didn't come out until approximately 2003 or something like that. And then I remembered that Beauty and the Beast came out in 1991! So there it is!

Chapter XVII

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 8th of May 1993

10:45 AM

Bella slipped on her top layer Quidditch robes and grabbed her broom. She walked out of the back and over towards Oliver.

"Are you ready for this? This is one of the easiest games of the season! Bella can easily take out that other Seeker. He's rather big for a Seeker and Bella's the best around" Oliver said, confidently. Fred and George exchanged glances.

"Yeah because I want to be..." Fred started out. Bella glared at him.

"We are never mentioning that again, you hear? That was the most embarrassing day of my life" Bella moaned at the reminder of the horrible Valentine's Day that she had gone through.

"But it was so funny! I wonder where he got all of those rhymes" George said, curiously. Bella gave them faux glares and pointed an accusing finger at the twins.

"Obviously, you!" she snapped. The twins laughed, loudly and Oliver silenced them with looks.

"We can do this! We need this match and then the Cup is practically ours. Bella, try to stall as long as possible. We need the score high and then you can swoop in and just steal the Snitch from under Digger's nose. I will be so incredibly easy. Like taking a toy broom from a baby" Oliver said. He sounded corrupt to the others on the Quidditch team but that was just how he was.

"I'm pretty sure that it's stealing a toy wand from a baby" Angelina put in. Oliver glared at her and turned towards everyone.

"Time to go out men! And women" Oliver added after Katie opened her mouth.

They were facing Hufflepuff and Bella scoffed at the idea. Hufflepuffs were soft. Well...except for that hunky Seeker, Cedric Diggory, but that was beside the point.

"Mount your brooms!" commanded Madam Hooch once all of them were situated. Bella gave Cedric a predatory snarl, a warning. He looked at her in shock. She couldn't understand why. They all knew how competitive she was.

"The match has been cancelled!" McGonagall shouted with a magically amplified voice. There were boos and hisses but it wasn't as bad as Oliver's reaction. He looked like he had just fallen into despair.

"But Professor! We've got to play—the cup—Gryffindor!" Oliver shouted. McGonagall ignored him in favor of turning back to the booing and hissing crowd.

"All students are to make their way back to their House common room, where their Head of Houses will give them further information. As quickly as possible, please!" McGonagall said. She canceled the charm and turned to Bella who froze at the look. She knew something was wrong.

"Miss Potter, I think you'd better come with me" McGonagall said. Bella nodded and followed McGonagall and she could see Ron running down from the stands to meet them at the exit of the Quidditch pitch.

"Yes, perhaps you'd better come as well, Weasley."

They walked into the castle and soon Bella realized that there was an attack. She gasped when she realized Hermione wasn't with them.

"This may come as a shock. Miss Potter, your fourth riddle has been delivered and I fear you might not have your...sister to help you" McGonagall said, almost gently. Bella ran as fast as she could into the hospital wing and gasped when she saw what was supposed to be Hermione.

Hermione's dark hair was pulled back into a plait and her skin was covered with sticky blood. Bella could tell that the darker blood

wasn't her own. The sword tattoo on Hermione's arm wasn't there any longer. A long sword was by her side. The blade was black with silver Rune markings on the blade. The hilt was black with gold wrapped around in intricate patterns, building a safeguard around the actual hilt and handle. A sheath was now on Hermione's arm.

"OH GOD! Mórrígan! Oh God!" Bella cried when she saw the large gash going across Hermione's upper chest. From shoulder to shoulder was a jagged tear in her skin that would most likely never heal completely. She ran to Hermione's side, tears running down her alabaster face. Bella's magic went out of control as it swirled around, dangerously. It wasn't tangible but everyone could feel the raging magic.

"Anastasia, don't cry" choked out Hermione. Madam Pomfrey fretted when she spoke.

"She hasn't spoken since she came here. I had feared the cut had messed up her larynx. She can speak! Thank Merlin" Pomfrey said. Ron was frozen near the door when Bella looked up.

"Do you want Apollo, darling? Thanatos? Oh God, I'm so sorry. I'm so, so, so sorry" Bella sobbed. Hermione coughed and Bella wiped the blood from the corner of her mouth.

"It wasn't your fault. No, I don't need them right now. It's okay, Anastasia. Don't cry. Please don't cry" Hermione whispered. Bella shook her head and brushed the stray hairs from her sister's face. Bella could hear something cracking but she didn't even pay attention. Her sister had been almost killed.

"I knew it! I knew something was going to go wrong! I knew it!" Bella screamed. Madam Pomfrey's eyes widened and she grabbed Bella by the wrist. Bella looked up at her, hysterically.

"If you don't calm down I will force a Calming Draught down your throat" Madam Pomfrey warned. Bella sobbed, loudly and she shook with each sob. Her cheeks were turning red from loss of breath. Ron walked, quickly to his best friends and helped the girl sobbing on the floor into the chair beside Hermione's bed.

"Bella..." he said, quietly. Bella bowed her head and let out another cry of anguish.

"It's all my fault! Colin, Justin, Mrs. Norris and now you, Mione. I can't do this anymore..." Bella choked out. Hermione snarled and leaned up before grabbing Bella by the chin with surprising strength. Bella looked at her in shock.

"Listen up, Anastasia. This wasn't your fault. I didn't just fight the beast for nothing. I fought it because I was trying to deliver this damned riddle to you beforehand. Why do you think it tried to tear my heart out?" Hermione demanded. McGonagall froze and the infirmary doors slammed open. Dumbledore, Tom, and Lockhart stood in the doorway. Tom looked malevolent and he stormed forward.

"Child, explain to me why I felt your magic destroying Lady Hogwarts' wards?" demanded Tom. Bella's eyes widened.

"I...I didn't mean to. Hermione was attacked by the beast" Bella sniffled. Tom nodded, slowly.

"I am aware of this. That doesn't give you an excuse to let go of your control. Make sure it doesn't happen again. Granger, recount the story" Tom instructed, sharply. Dumbledore stepped forward.

"Tom, now there is no need to be heartless" Dumbledore warned. Tom turned on Dumbledore, sharply.

"I am not being heartless. I am being productive. If that means pushing aside emotions to ensure the safety of everyone else, so be it. She needs to keep more control on her magic. That is the end of the story. Granger, will you please" Tom said, once more. Pomfrey rounded on him.

"You have no right to command my patients" Pomfrey snapped. Tom glared at her in rage.

"I do when it causes my ward to start destroying ancient wards that have been up for more than a thousand years" Tom countered in anger. Pomfrey glared at the man and took a step forward.

"Tom Marvolo Riddle, as soon as you cause Miss Granger distress you will be out of here faster than you can see 'I'm sorry'," Pomfrey said. Tom gave her a stressed out smirk but a smirk nonetheless.

"Well, that's good because I don't apologize. Miss Granger, story please" Tom commanded. Pomfrey glared and Hermione turned to Tom and leaned up, slightly. She coughed and Pomfrey shoved a potion in her hand.

"I was in the library. I got a lead on the three riddles. We solved them and they are no longer bound to Bella. I had my mirror with me because what I was reading was written backwards. Like the inscription on the top of the Mirror of Erised. Anyway, while I was reading, two glowing eyes appeared in the mirror. They were yellow. At first, I thought it was a Basilisk" Hermione started. Bella and Tom froze as one and glanced at Hermione.

"Was it?" Ron demanded. Hermione shook her head.

"I looked at the reflection and I wasn't Petrified. The eyes looked too feline. A body formed around the eyes and it was Sphinx! Sphinxes petrify their victims if they get the riddle wrong. Then they tear them apart and eat them. Anyway, I turned around and it was growling at me and then asked me to relay a message to Bella if I got away alive. She told me the riddle and she obviously didn't expect me to fight back. She attacked me and started clawing at me. I hid under the table and then...I switched" Hermione said, her voice going softer at the end. Bella obviously understood what she was saying. But the adults and Ron looked confused.

"Switched into what?" asked McGonagall. Hermione blushed before looking down and looked up through a guarded expression.

"I suffer from partial ASPD. Antisocial Personality Disorder. My parents didn't want anyone to know. I lack any sense of remorse or empathy for most people. For example, if Colin Creevy dropped dead at this very moment, I would feel no remorse. I wouldn't even give my condolences because I wouldn't give a damn. But if Bella died, I would be driven into a depression, most likely. I can't stand sitting around so I read all the time. I cannot tolerate boredom. I am also very aggressive if you annoy me enough. I switched into aggressive" Hermione explained. Dumbledore looked shocked. Ron was frowning. Bella noted the gleam of triumph in Tom's eyes before it was guarded again.

"I see. Continue your story, Miss Granger" Dumbledore said. Hermione nodded and she coughed again. She downed the potion and she looked green for a moment before going back from the pale pallor she was before to a more healthy color.

"Well, when I get aggressive, my magic rages. Kind of like Bella's does when her emotions are out of control. That's why she has to have her wand with her at all times. She has way too much magic. Anyway, my arm started hurting though I don't know why and then it shifted and the sword disappeared and was replaced with a sheath. The sword appeared in my hand and then I just knew...I knew how to fight with it. It was strange. Someone in my head was telling me how to do it. I channeled my magic through it and the blade glowed a bit before I starting slashing. It caught the sphinx on the eye. I think it's blind in one eye now" Hermione said. Bella looked at Hermione with wide eyes.

"So, how'd you get hurt like that?" Ron asked. Hermione nodded.

"When I blinded it, it got angry and slashed me across the chest. It tore my clothes but only one claw actually got me. It hurt so bad..." Hermione said, softly. Bella whimpered a bit before steeling herself.

"What was the riddle Hermione?" Bella whispered. Hermione's eyes widened and she leaned in to whisper it to the girl.

"Don't you think everyone should know the riddle, to help Bella?" Dumbledore asked. Hermione glared at the Headmaster.

"No."

"Hermione, the riddle. I need the last riddle" Bella said. Hermione nodded and glanced at Bella.

"The last riddle was..." she trailed off before pointing at Bella's hand. Bella stared in fascination and winced in pain as something was carved onto her hand. The symbol of the three gifts was on her hand.

"That...that was the riddle" Hermione said, pointing at her hand. Bella's eyes widened in shock and she turned to look at everyone who was staring at her hand in wonder.

"This is the riddle! What the bloody hell?" Bella snapped. Hermione nodded, slowly and gave Bella a slight smile.

"That's it. Figure it out. And it's only for you to figure out. We could help during the last ones but this...this is the final one that will tip the balance between your life and your death" Hermione said. Bella nodded and bit her lip.

"I'll solve it. I swear" Bella whispered. Hermione nodded and looked up at the girl.

"Read, Bella. Death, Hall...oh. You will find it" Hermione murmured. She blinked and her eyelids began to slide close. Ron's eyes widened.

"What happened? Did she pass out?" he asked, worriedly. Pomfrey waved her hand and pointed towards the empty potion bottle on her bedside table.

"That potion was supposed to put her to sleep. I suppose it didn't work immediately. Ah, well. You must be going, now! My patient needs her rest" Pomfrey said, ushering them out. Lockhart was babbling as they all walked out.

"I could've been there to save her. I'm quite experienced with Sphinxes and I could've solved the riddle in minutes—" Lockhart said, though no one was paying any attention to the poor fool.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Monday the 24th of May 1993

8:00 AM

When Bella and Ron walked into the Great Hall the next day, Tom was sitting in the giant golden throne-like chair. He was smirking to himself but Bella knew that not everybody could tell. Only those who knew him best and that was narrowed down to Dumbledore and herself...and Hermione, who wasn't close to him at all, but was able to decipher expressions quite easily.

The Great Hall was buzzing, quietly. Everyone was speculating on why Tom was sitting there.

"Do you think Dumbledore was attacked?" Dean asked when they sat down. Bella snorted and everyone turned to look at her in curiosity.

"He's the best wizard on the face of the planet besides Riddle. I really doubt it. But whatever happened, Riddle looks like he really wants to tell everyone" Bella said, looking at Tom from the corner of her eye. Parvarti looked at her in surprise.

"How do you know?" Parvarti demanded. Bella smirked and pointed at Tom who stood up, his eyes lit up with excitement.

"In light of current events, Professor Dumbledore has been removed as Headmaster of Hogwarts" Tom started. He let the students react first. In an instant everyone looked fearful. Except for the Slytherins who were grinning. Only Muggleborns had been attacked so far and they didn't think they had to worry about anything. Zabini looked pained at the moment.

"I have been taken on the role at this moment in time. I urge all of you not to panic. Classes will go on as usual and I will be there to teach my own classes. You will do well to travel in packs. There have been four attacks. To all, it would be most prudent that you do not disturb certain students who have been tasked with solving the riddle that will stop the attacks. Thank you and continue with breakfast" Tom said, smugly. Bella could feel the eyes on her and she looked down before looking back up at her friends' curious gazes.

"Did you find any answers to the riddles?" Seamus asked. Bella knew he was a half-blood so he knew the old story of the Library of Corvus. She nodded and glanced back at Seamus.

"Yes. I've solved three of the four. You know that the last one sums it up so, I've only got that one left. Hermione told me I've got to do it on my own though" Bella said, quietly. Dean leaned forward and looked at her with wide eyes.

"What was the last riddle?" Lavender asked in a hushed tone. Ron pointed at Bella's hand and Bella lifted it to show the carving of the symbol on her hand.

"That's the riddle? In the fairytale it's always in words" Parvarti said, indignantly. Bella shrugged and leaned on her palm to hide the symbol from the other students. They had started to ogle her.

"Yes, well. Unfortunately, now I have Grindelwald's mark carved into my skin and since it was magically induced, Madam Pomfrey can't heal it" Bella said, in annoyance. They nodded in understanding but Bella knew they couldn't possibly understand.

When she later got to DADA, Malfoy was talking since Tom wasn't in the room yet. This didn't surprise her since he now had DADA classes to attend to while being Headmaster.

"I always knew Father would be the one to get rid of that old coot. I told you that Father thinks Dumbledore is the worst Headmaster the school has ever had. Professor Riddle is a good change. It's much more capable. McGonagall wouldn't last a day" Malfoy said. Bella and Ron glared at him but he kept talking to his fellow Slytherins.

"I'm quite surprised the Mudbloods haven't packed their bags. Bet you five galleons that the next one will die. Pity it wasn't Granger" Malfoy said. Zabini and Bella stood up at one and pointed at him, accusingly.

"YOU DON'T MEAN THAT!" they shouted in unison before glancing at each other. They sat down as Malfoy paled and rolled his eyes.

"Oh, don't embarrass yourself, Princess. I meant what I said. Granger should've died" Malfoy snapped. Potter glared at him and Ron sneered.

"Let me at him. I don't care, I don't need my wand, I'm going to kill him with bare hands" Ron threatened before Tom entered the room.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 29th of May 1993

8:45 PM

"Bella Potter!" Tom shouted as his eyes widened. The Great Hall looked towards the entrance. Tom was standing there, wide-eyed. Bella stood up, determinedly. Ron stood along with her wide-eyed.

"Yes, sir!" Bella said, dutifully. She knew he was being completely serious and that something was terribly wrong. She could feel it and she was absolutely terrified...

"It's about time you get going. You've got a message for you. Come along. Weasleys file after me. McGonagall, you're in charge. Lockhart, you're with me! The rest of the faculty will stay in their Houses with their students until she comes back up" Tom commanded, like a general. McGonagall stood up in shock.

"You can expect me to let a student go into the Library!" she shouted.

ANASTASIA SLYTHERIN WILL GO OR YOU WILL ALL DIE!

There were screams as the Sphinx's voice rang out in the panicking din. The group that Tom had called stood up before walking out. Bella led them and followed Tom until they reached a plain wall.

Red headed, Light hearts

To be found by the Mistress of the Claimer's Art

In you must go into the belly of the beast

And find them before they are deceased

Your Darkness will lead the way

Remember what the Mistress of War, Mórrígan last say

From the time of nine, three hours and three hours alone

You have to venture into the unknown

If you fail and you may not,

Their bodies will lie in the Library forever, never to rot

Bella watched with wide eyes as she read the clue on the wall. Fred and George frowned as they looked around.

"Where's Ginny and Gideon?" Fred asked. Bella's eyes widened and Ron gasped. Bella let out a small whimper.

"They were taken. They were taken into the Library..." Bella whispered. Everyone turned to look at the girl and Tom nodded. He took her wrist and looked down at her with determined eyes.

"You mustn't fail, Anastasia. Can't have a death on my hands" Tom said, smirking. Bella couldn't even smirk back. She squeezed her eyes shut, tightly before gripping the locket around her neck, tightly.

"I understand. I won't fail you, Tom. I promise" Bella said. She beckoned Ron forward when Percy grabbed Ron's arm.

"What?" demanded Ron. Tom blinked out of surprise of Bella calling him by his first name.

"Anastasia must go alone."

Lockhart's eyes widened and he shook his head. The girl was immensely annoying and she constantly sabotaged Tom and his relationship but she was still a little girl.

"She's still a child! I will go in her stead" Lockhart said. There was a rumble.

The girl! The girl alone must go! Anyone else shall be destroyed!

"The sphinx has spoken. Anastasia must go alone" Tom said, quietly. Bella nodded and turned to Tom before looking at him up and down before hugging him in a tight hug. Tom looked down at her in shock and slight revulsion. He didn't do public displays of affection. Nor did he do private displays of affection. Affection itself was repulsive. Bella pulled away and smirked at the people surrounding her.

"There's no damn way I'm going to go without a fight! I'm going to bring back Gideon and Ginny! I swear!" Bella promised. She jogged out of sight and looked around. She growled as she heard the feline chuckles from the Sphinx. The damned Sphinx was toying her but...someone was controlling the Sphinx.

But who?

"So...let my Darkness lead me. That would be the symbol" Bella muttered to herself. She lifted her hand up with the carved symbol. She watched in amazement as light burst from her hand. The bright light shot forward and hovered in front of her before it turned into a familiar crimson color. It moved forward and stopped as Bella stared in awe.

"Oh! Follow it. Okay" Bella said. She followed the light to the nearest spiral staircase. She walked up it to find a large door with a bronze knocker shaped like an eagle.

"Which came first, the phoenix, or the flame?" it asked. Bella tilted her head.

"It's a cycle. A circle and circles have no beginning" Bella answer, slightly unsure. The eagle looked at her curiously before glancing at her hand before it swung open. The light led her inside. It dawned on Bella that she was in the Ravenclaw common room and it was nice. There were tall bookcases and in the middle of two archways that led up to the dormitories was a statue of Rowena Ravenclaw. Bella saw how beautiful she was and she inspected the statue.

She didn't see how the light floated up to Rowena's diadem before setting in the middle where a stone would be. As soon as the light went there, the entire statue glowed before spinning twice and disappeared into the ground.

"This easier than I thought it would be" Bella said, quietly. She stepped onto the first step when suddenly someone grabbed her arm. She spun around and gasped when she saw Lockhart.

"What are you doing here? You're going to get us killed!" Bella hissed. Lockhart rolled his eyes.

"I'm going to go get the beast myself. You're just a child. You can't do anything against a Sphinx" Lockhart snapped. Bella glared at him in anger.

"And you think you can do better? You're total a fraud!" she shouted. Lockhart growled and withdrew his wand.

"I think we can arrange that I found this place and got the kids myself, don't you agree? You've led me to the entrance" Lockhart said, smirking.

"No, no. Not so fast."

The two looked to where the voice was coming from. Ron was standing there with his wand out and pointing at Lockhart. Bella's eyes widened and she snatched Lockhart's wand from him while he was momentarily distracted before snapping it quickly.

"YOU JUST SNAPPED MY WAND!" Lockhart shouted. Bella shrugged.

"And you're wasting my time. I only have three hours!" Bella countered. Suddenly, Lockhart grabbed Ron's wand and pointed it at Bella.

"The journey ends here children. I know where the Library is and now it is my time to find the ultimate knowledge. I will tell them that the Sphinx ate your brother and sister and you lost your minds at seeing their mangled bodies. Say goodbye to your memories" Lockhart said. Bella opened her mouth to stop him from using the mangled wand before shutting her mouth.

"Obliviate!" shouted Lockhart, waving the wand sharply. Ron shouted as Lockhart flew backwards as the white jet shot out at the man. Lockhart hit the bookcase, causing it to topple over and piled up over him. Ron's eyes widened as he looked at his mangled wand that was now in splinters.

"You're going to have to get a new one" Bella said, nonchalantly. Ron nodded before looking at Bella.

"You've got to go. Please save my siblings" Ron said. Bella nodded, determinedly and she knew she looked confident. She was anything but. She was terrified and she had no idea what it was her that had to this.

"I will. Ron, I won't let you down. I promise" Bella swore. Ron nodded as Bella descended down the spiral staircase. Bella lifted her wand to bring light to the dark stairway.

"Lumos" whispered Bella. A bright light ignited from her wand and she could see the stone staircase. It looked like it was endless. Bella didn't know for how long she had been walking before she reached the bottom.

When she reached the bottom, it opened up into a large antechamber. Covering one whole wall was a pair of bronze doors. Engraved in the doors was a circle. Standing in front of it was the most majestic creature Bella had ever seen.

It was tall and had fur the color of spun gold. A tawny mane surrounded its humanoid face. Its lean body was one of a lioness. The only thing that disrupted its majestic beauty was a scar running down its right eye. Its right eye was less as bright as the left one. Bella realized that it was blind in that eye. Hermione had done some damage. However, Bella gulped when she saw its razor-sharp claws.

"You have arrived. I am most impressed. Perhaps you shall be worthy of the great Library of Corvus" the sphinx said, passively. Bella cleared her throat and looked at the sphinx, honesty showing in her eyes.

"I don't want the knowledge. That's cheating. If I'm to conquer my enemies, I'll do it on my own terms. I just want to get my friends back" Bella said as calmly as possible. The sphinx looked amused.

"You don't mean that. Your true colors will show once you get closer. Just like that other girl's. Helen, I think he name was. Daughter of Helena...yes, yes. She had a hidden thirst for knowledge. Nonetheless, I believe you have an answer for me.

I am cold and hard. I bring those not solid.

I bring life yet their spirits have ascended from this world.

My heart is cracked in half yet I live not.

I am the stone of the riverbed.

What am I?" the sphinx reiterated. Bella smiled at the easy riddle. Well, it was easy now that she knew the answer.

"The resurrection stone" Bella said, certainly.

"Correct. Follow me, child" the sphinx said. The cracks in the door glowed before swinging open. The next room was cast and just as beautiful. The walls were made of iron and pretty. The door was made of silver. A triangle was carved delicately in the door.

"We are the next door and thus you must answer the next riddle.

Invisible to all.

Translucent I am.

I hide from Death and I hide Death.

What am I?"

"The Cloak of Invisibility" Bella countered, smiling. The Sphinx's calm demeanor never broke but she nodded.

"Very good, child. We should continue on if you wish to find your friends" the sphinx said. Bella continued on, with a determined expression on her face. This was just too easy. But she couldn't help but feel scared as she drew closer to the fourth riddle door. That she still hadn't figured out completely.

She would cross that bridge when she finally got there.

They passed through the silver door

"A connection to the heart of Victory.

Stolen from souls

Fashioned from tree

Created by the Claimer.

What am I?" asked the sphinx without any conversation now. Bella tilted her head as she looked at the golden door. It was gleaming and large and had a line running through the door.

"The Elder Wand..." murmured Bella. The Sphinx nodded and they passed through that door. Bella could feel her nerves getting to her now as he entered the next room. The walls were made of onyx bricks with a platinum door gleaming in front of her. It had an ornate doorknob and carved into the door was the sign of the three gifts.

"Now, for your final riddle. Give a name that has been passed through time that labels those three gifts. You have forty-five seconds" the sphinx said. Bella froze in horror before her mind went into overdrive.

"The clue...what did it say...Your Darkness will lead the way. Yeah, we established that. The next line was...er...Remember what the Mistress of War, Mórrígan, last say. That would be Hermione because she just loves her bloodshed" Bella worked out. The sphinx looked at her amused. It didn't believe that she could do this. Bella would prove it wrong.

"She said a lot of things. She said that only I would be able to find it out. Wait! No, she said something else last. She said 'Read, Bella. Death, Hall...oh. You will find it.' I didn't actually have to read anything so she said something else. Death, Hall, oh. Hallow. Three objects means plural! Hallows!" Bella said. The sphinx's eyes narrowed in suspicion as Bella used what supposedly only her sister had.

Intellect.

"Death Hallows. It must be an adjective because that doesn't sound right. Okay...I was good in English. Even if I was only there until Year 5. Right...so...death...deathly. Deathly...Hallows. The Deathly Hallows" Bella worked out, slowly. The sphinx growled internally.

"Correct. With seven seconds to spare. How...lucky of you" the sphinx growled. Bella shuddered. The sphinx sounded angry. She stood there, waiting for the doors to swing open but it did not. The sphinx looked at her, impatiently.

"Touch the door, child" the sphinx instructed. Bella nodded, hesitantly and she lifted the hand with the carved symbol of the Deathly Hallows. Her hand hovered over the door and she bit her lip.

Did she want to find out what was in there? Whatever opened the Library had powerful magic. Powerful Dark magic if it could control a strictly neutral beast like the sphinx. She cringed from the door and turned away.

"So you will leave the knowledge locked away? A good choice. I promise that their bodies will be preserved, never to rot" the sphinx said, coaxingly. Bella's eyes widened as she remembered the two little first years with flaming red hair, lying there...dead.

She slammed her palm to the door and around the cracks a bright light shined through and there was a hiss as the door slid open. Smoke came from the previously closed Library of Corvus.

And Bella stepped inside.

Chapter XVIII

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 29th of May 1993

10:10 PM

As soon as the light cleared, Bella stepped inside. She stared around in awe. The room was wide and open. There was one high back chair that was turned towards the fire but there were mile high bookcases. So many books and they looked brand new. The pages looked freshly cut from what Bella could see. She gasped in wonder when she realized that one person wrote it all.

The Girl-Who-Lived suddenly remembered what she had come down there for. She scanned the area before looking at the fireplace. Lying right in front of the mantle were two children, their hands locked together. Bella sprinted over and looked down at them.

Ginny's hair was spread out in a halo and her face looked relaxed. Gideon was just as pale as his sister, causing his freckles to jump out at her. He didn't look as relaxed as his sister. He looked tormented. Around their necks, linking them together was a gold chain. The symbol of the Deathly Hallows hung from the golden chain.

Bella touched her hand to Gideon's cheek. He was cold and his skin felt slightly waxy. Ginny was slightly warmer than him but only slightly.

"Well, aren't you a pretty one?"

Bella spun around, not recognizing the voice.

Her eyes widened when it found the source. A boy was sitting in the chair across from her. His leg was crossed, primly and he was sitting with his back ramrod straight. He had a large book with leather bindings in his lap.

Piercing navy eyes were rimmed with dark circles and he had an angular face. Light blonde hair sat atop his head and fell to his shoulders in wild curls. However, Bella knew he was a wizard. The

boy donned dark grey robes. He looked 17. All in all, he was beautiful.

"Who are you?" Bella asked, in a quiet voice. She positioned herself in front of the twins, ready to block them from any attack.

"A witness, you could call me" the beautiful boy said, off handedly. Bella glared at him in anger.

"Why didn't you do anything?" she demanded. The beautiful boy shrugged.

"I don't have a wand. They're not dead. So...you are the beautiful Bella Potter. What a pleasure to meet you" the boy said. Bella glared at him, even if a light blush covered her cheeks.

"Yes, I'm Bella Potter. What happened here?" Bella asked, turning back to Gideon and Ginny. The Girl-Who-Lived swept a stray curl from Gideon's forehead, tenderly. The boy studied her, closely.

"They paid the price for opening the Library."

"WHAT! They opened the Library? But...but I thought they liked me" Bella said, in shock. The boy's lips curled into a cruel smile as he surveyed Bella's shock. Bella didn't even notice. She looked at the twins with a sense of betrayal filling her.

"Oh, they do. 'Oh, Bella Potter is so nice to me!' 'Oh! Do you think she'll like my song?' Do you know how utterly annoying it is to hear two eleven-year-olds going on and on about an insignificant little girl?" the boy snapped. Bella's eyes widened as she detected what he had called her.

This boy...something...

Something was familiar about him.

Her eyes raked over his appearance, taking in every little thing. The boy smirked at her. His posture reflected his amusement and he leaned back, linking his long fingers together.

"Would you like a hint?" asked the boy. Bella's lips pulled back in a snarl and she stood up, her wand out.

"Sure" Bella said, uncertainly. She crouched in front of Gideon and Ginny, ready to protect them if it came to it. The boy stood up and Bella had to look up at him. He was pretty tall. She had to strain her neck to meet his gaze.

He lifted one finger before he began to write in the air with it. White writing of fire was being written.

G.

E.

L.

L.

E.

R.

T.

Bella's eyes widened in recognition and she slid back, slowly and cautiously. She waited for in the inevitable letters to join the rest of the boy's name.

G.

R.

I.

N.

D.

E.

L.

W.

A.

L.

D.

Bella jumped up and held up her wand as Grindelwald began to laugh. His laugh was hearty and cold. It chilled Bella to the bone. This boy was beautiful. She didn't want to associate him with Grindelwald. It just seemed so wrong.

"Gellert Grindelwald" Bella said in an unfathomable tone. Grindelwald gave an enchanting smile.

"Correct, Bella. Good...fitting that you now know that my hand is the hand you will die by tonight" Grindelwald said. Bella nodded before looking down at the twins with soft eyes.

She wasn't giving up. No way in hell was she going to leave them down here because she wasn't ready to die. She was only 12! She decided that if she went down, she'd bring him down with her.

And if she was going to die down there, she was going to go in style.

"I find it curious that you aren't scared. You've met me before, yes?" asked Grindelwald. Bella nodded and tilted her head before standing up straight.

"You've heard the stories. How did you hear it anyway?" asked Bella, curiously. Grindelwald was still only 17, she thought. He'd want to brag. She didn't really think it was the real Grindelwald, anyway. The lines around him were blurry but solidifying with every second.

"These two love to talk. They're voices are one of the things I won't miss, among others" Grindelwald said, smirking.

"I see and Gideon really asked you about that stupid song?" Bella asked. She was trying to distract him and he wasn't really noticing too much. Grindelwald nodded, his cruel and amused smile returning, full force. Bella could see even more that he wasn't handsome. He was just too pretty. It was slightly bewildering to associate the beautiful boy in front of her with the twisted old man that had taken over Quirrell.

"I did. I found it humiliating. Thus, I told him it was excellent. Humiliation is an excellent intimidation tactic" Grindelwald pointed out. Bella nodded in agreement and tilted her head.

"So, what's happening to them?" Bella said, pointing at the twins who hadn't moved an inch since Bella had first seen them.

"They're souls and magical cores are being sucked out of their bodies. And inserted into me. Twenty questions are over. Onnisciente, you may now enjoy your dinner. Goodbye, Bella Potter" Grindelwald said, abruptly. Bella's eyes widened as the sphinx growled before pouncing.

She barely dodged.

"What a rude way to end a conversation!" Bella shouted as she ducked again as the sphinx swiped at her. The sphinx was fierce and a long string of growls erupted from the powerful beast.

"Stupefy!" Bella shouted, pointing at the beast. The beast was also quick and intelligent. It quickly ducked the spell and came at Bella from the side. Bella spun as Onnisciente ripped her robes from her. Bella shrugged off the robes before tossing them to the side. She got into a battle stance and the sphinx leaned forward, ready to spring.

"Master, she will be destroyed" Onnisciente said. Bella grinned.

"Is that a threat?" she demanded. Onnisciente shook its head and gave a feral grin.

"No, it's a promise, young one."

The sphinx pounced at Bella. Bella spun from the spot and fell over her fallen robes. She slid over to the high back chair and grasped the side. Grindelwald looked over at her with a calm expression and ran a finger down her face. Bella gasped when she realized it was solid and it burned. She cringed back and glanced at Onnisciente. She swallowed before realizing that she had to bring this animal back to its senses or...kill it.

"Onnisciente...that's your name right? Well, this isn't your master! Rowena Ravenclaw was...remember?" Bella said, gulping. This made Onnisciente pause and looked at her, quizzically.

"Who is Rowena Ravenclaw? I know all but who. Who is she?" Onnisciente asked. Bella glared at Grindelwald, accusingly who was still thumbing through the pages of the book like nothing was wrong.

"You erased its...her...his...whatever, memory! I don't know how but you did!" Bella snapped. Grindelwald shrugged.

"All for the Greater Good" Grindelwald said, liltngly. Bella watched as he brushed a hair behind his ear and turned the page, delicately.

"Man, you are the most flaming homosexual I've ever met. And I've met Dumbledore" Bella said. She was taking a chance to see if he'd react as violently as he had the year before. Bella wasn't disappointed. She jumped back just as Grindelwald lashed out. He glared at her in rage. He stood up, gracefully, proving her point.

"I am not homosexual! You...you bitch!" he shouted, almost childishly. Bella smirked at him and jumped out of the way just as Grindelwald sent flames at her. Bella could see that he was skilled in wandless magic. However he was only sending fire from the fireplace at her. As if he were Summoning it. Bella dodged as she tried to remind Onnisciente of who its Mistress was.

"Onni...can I call you Onni? I think I will! Rowena Ravenclaw had an unnatural knack for knowing things! She was your Mistress! She recorded all these books before she died. She was one of the Founders!" Bella shouted. Onnisciente gave a feline frown and tilted her head.

"The Founders. It rings a bell. Founders of what?" it asked. Bella yelped as a fireball grazed her arm. Grindelwald looked downright furious now.

"SHUT UP, YOU STUPID GIRL! YOU'RE RUINING EVERYTHING!" he shouted, angrily. Bella glared at him before running straight at the fireplace. She jumped over Gideon and Ginny and aimed her wand at the fireplace.

"SHOVE IT, YOU MORON! ONNI! The Founders of Lady Hogwarts! Aguamenti!" she shrieked. A stream of water came from the end of her wand and put the fire out, quickly. Grindelwald growled, loudly before storming over to Bella. Bella fell backwards into the wet ashes of the fireplace to get away from him. Bella crawled forward, to protect Gideon and Ginny.

She touched their cheeks and could feel all of the heat leaving them. Grindelwald looked almost completely solid.

Correction, he was solid.

"I'm alive...I'M ALIVE!" Grindelwald shouted, happily. Bella gave him a sour look and rolled her eyes. He started walking towards her, slowly. He was drawing out the moment. Bella leaned back and pressed herself into the wall behind the fireplace. Ash sprinkled into her hair and smudged on her cheeks. She could feel the ash, getting into a cut that she hadn't even realized she'd gotten.

"Thank you for the broadcast, Doctor Frankenstein" Bella said in a monotonous tone. She had watched her Muggle movies. Sirius had been obsessed with them for a time.

Sirius...she knew it was over. That she was done. She would never get to see her beloved uncle ever again. She had failed.

She had failed her best friend Ron. He would never forgive her for not bringing back his little brother and sister. She looked down at Ginny and Gideon and knew. She just knew that their life was done and she only had about a minute and a half until they permanently became empty husks that would never rot.

She had failed Thanatos and Apollo. They'd hate her for leaving them, even if they didn't know it.

And Hermione...her sister. Her sister who had helped her so much. Her sister who had scarred for her. She'd be so disappointed in her to know that she had not won. That she had not come out in victory. Bella was disappointed in herself as well.

But, she knew one person would be more than upset and disappointed. He'd hate her. He'd hate her for dying on him. Every time someone would say her name, he'd curse it.

Tom...she couldn't let down Tom. Of all the people she cared for, she couldn't let him down the most. She didn't know why but she couldn't. She grabbed at the locket around her neck for moral support and she froze as it pulsed, like a heartbeat. It was so comforting and so familiar that it gave her a sense of determination.

She sat up and crawled over to Gideon and Ginny just as Grindelwald met them and touched the necklace.

"You're finished Bella Potter. You've lost..." Grindelwald said, quietly. Bella let out a primal scream and grabbed the necklace before snapping it from Gideon and Ginny's neck. She looked up, her eyes glowing an Avada Kedavra green color. She felt three presences behind her.

She turned around and stared in shock at the woman and two men standing behind her. One was the woman from her dreams. The older Hermione. The sword Hermione had wielded against the sphinx was in hand. The sphinx took a step back as it saw the sword.

The other was the Italian man. He was glaring at Grindelwald. In his hand was a spear that looked deadly and dangerous. He was standing behind Older Hermione.

Next to him was another man with pale blonde hair. He had his hood up and was dressed in black with a silver cloak over it, contrary to the other two who had hints of white and grey. If Bella was honest with herself, he looked a bit like a dementor. He had a scythe in one hand and his wand in the other.

They looked translucent and they were solidifying.

"You have tried to harm the personification of Conquest and Victory. That would devastate the balance" Older Hermione said, in a ghostly tone. Grindelwald's eyes widened as he looked at Bella. Bella looked around, confused.

"A price must be paid" the Italian man said. The pale haired man moved forward, gliding as a dementor and the floor turned to ice under his feet.

"And a soul must be taken" he said in a frosty tone. He stood in front of Bella, who handed it without delay, and sucked in a breath with his lips touching the cold metal. Wisps of black and white particles floated from the necklace and into the pale haired man's mouth. He sucked it into his body, giving his face a healthier glow. He let out a rattling laugh of content that should have made Bella shake in fear. But it was a comforting sound.

Grindelwald began screaming pain as the man processed the soul he had just devoured. Bella watched in morbid fascination as Grindelwald exploded into thousands of sparks of magic. They swirled together, forming two balls and slamming into Gideon and Ginny. They jolted and two pieces of white remained hovering in the air. It floated down, serenely to Gideon and Ginny before entering their body through their nose.

Bella turned to see the three people fading.

"DON'T GO! Don't leave me" Bella pleaded, recognizing them as her family.

"We will see you again. Remember that, mia sorella" the Italian man said, gently. Older Hermione nodded.

"We know you have many questions. But they will be answered in time. And we are still here...around. But dormant. Remember that, my sister" Older Hermione said, kindly. The pale haired man stared at Bella, contemplating.

"Sister, I love you. I will be bitter and angry and distant from you, now, when I am not who I wish to be. But deep down, I love you. Remember that, my sister" he said. Bella nodded, feeling a deep connection with that brother. They faded from existence just as Gideon and Ginny gasped in unison.

They shot up and clawed at their necks as if to remove the necklace but Bella lifted up the tangled remains. The necklace was half melted and looked old. It looked about sixty years old and the age showed.

"Taken care of" she said, with a smile. Gideon and Ginny swallowed before Ginny burst into tears. Gideon was looking at Bella, pleadingly.

"I'm sorry! I'm so sorry, Bella. Grindelwald made me! I didn't mean to. I'm sorry!" Gideon pleaded. He wrapped one arm around Ginny's shoulders as she sobbed. Bella shook her head and hugged both children.

"It's alright. It's going to be okay. We're going to get out of here. Onni, can you help here? I don't think they can walk" Bella said, quietly. Onnisciente nodded and wandered over.

"Climb on my back, little children" Onnisciente said. Bella helped the heaving Ginny and nerve-ridden Gideon. She swung on behind them and wrapped her arm around Gideon's waist. Gideon wrapped his arms around Ginny's. Onnisciente took off at a gentle run and Bella was so tired and bruised that she couldn't even enjoy it. As they went, the doors slammed closed and Bella's palm burned. When they got to the first door, they slipped off Onnisciente's back.

"Thank you, Lady Victory. You have freed me from oppression and I am very indebted to you. Whatever you need" Onnisciente promised. Bella looked at Onnisciente, tenderly.

"Seal it away forever. Never again should it open. No one should have this type of knowledge. Please seal it away" Bella nodded. Onnisciente glared at the doors and they hissed and turned to stone. Bella smiled.

"Your wish has been granted. Your other half is waiting for you" Onnisciente said. Bella frowned at the cryptic message but nodded. She turned back to the hunched over twins.

"Come along. It's almost midnight. I only have until midnight when the staircase will seal over. Let's go" Bella said. They nodded and they walked up the dark staircase. Bella lifted her wand.

"Lumos" Bella said, quietly a bright light erupted from the end of her wand and it illuminated the twins' terrified faces.

"I don't want to go back" Ginny whispered as they began to see a very faint light. Bella turned on the girl, her eyes wide and she looked down at the girl. Ginny cowered back as they cast Bella's eyes in an unnatural light. They looked as green as a certain Unforgiveable.

"Why not?" Bella asked, calmly. Ginny gulped and Gideon had to answer for her.

"We're going to get in trouble. We should've given it in we didn't mean to hurt anyone. We cut them and carved the words into their skin. We didn't mean to" Gideon repeated the words like a mantra. Bella kissed each of their cheeks. Gideon blushed darkly.

"You're going to be fine. You made a mistake. If that were a crime, we'd all be in Azkaban by now. Let's go" Bella murmured. They nodded and walked all the way upstairs. As soon as they emerged there were cheers.

"My babies!" someone shouted before hugging Gideon and Ginny tightly.

Bella blinked when she saw Hermione standing there, looking tired, but her sword in hand and smiling. She looked at the girl, knowingly. Bella tried to smile at the girl.

The entire Weasley family, Mrs. And Mr. Weasley included, stood before her. Ron was grinning stupidly at her. Sirius was giving her a big smile. Dumbledore was staring at her with, twinkling eyes. But she wasn't looking for the rest of them. Bella limped over to Tom. He was staring at her with unfathomable eyes.

"And it is done" she said, solemnly. Tom nodded just as solemnly.

"So it is" Tom said. He extended his hand and Bella let the twisted remains fall into his opened hand. As soon as he caught it, he closed his hand over it before walking towards Dumbledore and placing it in his hand. Dumbledore inspected it before his face fell.

"It was Grindelwald" Hermione piped up. The words silenced everyone. Bella nodded in agreement.

"There was...was a piece of soul, I think, in the necklace" Bella said. Dumbledore froze and turned to the girl. He looked absolutely horrified though he tried to hide it behind a benign façade.

"There is a lot to be discussed. Come alone, Bella" Dumbledore said. Bella shook her head and cleared her throat before looking up at everyone. She smiled at them.

"No. Everyone should hear the tale. But I must say that the soul piece is no more. It was taken...eaten...devoured" Bella said, trailing off. Hermione's lips curled into a grin and took Bella's hand.

"He fed? In front of you? When he fed then, I couldn't see. He had blocked me. He would've never let you unless he really had to. He sounds like a dementor, doesn't he? His voice rattles and where he steps it goes cold...wow!" Hermione said, awestruck. Dumbledore suddenly looked very worried. Sirius stepped forward and pulled his somewhat adopted daughter closer to him in a loose hug.

"Doe, what is she talking about?" Sirius asked in confusion. Bella grinned happily.

"Thanatos. Thanatos devoured a part of Grindelwald's soul. It is a long tale. Full of excitement and despair, I promise to tell you everything because you deserve to hear it. Here it goes..." Bella said, pulling them into a seat. Bella sat curled into Sirius' side.

And she began the story of her and the Library of Corvus. Gideon and Ginny said their part as well, confessing that it was them and that they had done everything. They also said they couldn't quite remember anything. Bella smirked as she got to describing Grindelwald.

"Did you know that Grindelwald was actually quite pretty as a teen?" Bella asked. This caused snorts and gasps of laughter from most. Dumbledore merely looked amused but slightly put on edge. Sirius grinned.

"Don't you mean handsome?" asked Sirius. Bella shook her head with a smirk on her face.

"No...he was very pretty almost insultingly so. I kind of felt ugly next to the boy. My self-esteem rocketed downwards. I've digressed. As I was saying, I had turned around and saw this boy, sitting there. He was leafing through the page of some book. Except, I knew he wasn't truly a boy. He wasn't completely solid. I mean, he could sit and stuff, so I get his arse was solid or whatever, but around the

edges he fuzzy. I asked him 'who are you' and he said 'a witness'. I told him that I was Bella Potter. This amused him, I guess" Bella said. Tom groaned and glared at her.

"You don't tell anybody your name if you don't know them and they're the only one there, dumbass. That means they took everyone else out," he snapped. Bella glared at him in outrage. Mrs. Weasley looked ready to say something but glanced at Sirius. Sirius was snickering in his seat.

"I am not a dumbass! And he already knew me. He started whining about Ginny and Gideon opening the Library and how they talked about me and how I was insignificant. Yeah, that's when I noticed something was wrong. I'm pretty sure I remember someone else telling me I was insignificant or stupid or something like that. He looked familiar, only because of his eyes. I've never met anyone with navy colored eyes! It's just one of those weird things you never forget" Bella babbled. Tom's eyes narrowed at her. He could tell she wished to stop speaking. But she wasn't going to stop speaking but she had vowed to continue.

"Bella..." he murmured. Her eyes snapped to him and he gestured vaguely for her to continue. She nodded once in understanding before grabbing at the locket around her neck. Sirius watched, curiously as she closed her eyes for a second. She looked back up and smiled.

"So, then he asked me for a hint and I said go ahead. He wrote in the air with his fingers his name. He was skilled in limited wandless magic I guess. The name wasn't solid and was made only of light. Not fire or some crazy shit...er sorry...like that. I found out that he helped make Bella's Song" Bella began. George and Fred grinned.

"I'm the Beast to your Belle...a!

I'm the Prince to your Cinderella!

Bella!

I wanna be your fell—" they began. Tom glared at them, with slightly crimson eyes and they shut up. Tom smirked in triumph before turning back to Bella. She smiled at him, gratefully.

"He set Onnisciente...the sphinx, on me and it seemed to not remember Rowena Ravenclaw. I began fighting it for a while and then it stopped when it decided that it wanted to know who Ravenclaw was. Grindelwald got pissed and I called a flaming homosexual. He called me a bitch and started throwing fireballs at me from the fireplace. I put out the fire just as I said Lady Hogwarts and Onni went back to its senses. Then, he said 'I'M ALIVE, I'M ALIVE'. Apparently, he sucked all the soul and magic out of them" Bella said. Mrs. Weasley gasped and leaned forward, with wide mouth.

"What happened? What happened to my babies?" she demanded.

"I told him, 'Thank you for the broadcast, Doctor Frankenstein'. He was really pissed off. He started coming towards me and I knew that I was going to die. And then...I thought of Sirius and Hermione and Ron and then I knew Marvolo would hate me if I died. I am the only other Parseltongue. So, I got off my ass and tore the necklace from their necks. And then I felt them" Bella said, quietly. Dumbledore looked at her with twinkling eyes. They were twinkling with curiosity.

"Who was there?" Dumbledore asked. Bella smirked.

"Me."

Everyone turned to look at Hermione who still had her sword in hand. Dumbledore's eyes landed on it and he stared at it in curiosity.

"That is the Sword of War from your tattoo, correct?" Dumbledore asked. Hermione nodded, nonchalantly.

"It is. I needed it."

"That's a wicked sword and all but where'd you get it from?" Fred started.

"And how?" George continued.

"And why did you need it?" the elder set of twins finished together. Hermione cleared her throat and lifted the sleeve of her dressing gown along with her nightgown to show her arm. The sheath glistened in a blood color.

"This is the sheath for my sword. I made an oath against Lockhart. That if he ever raised his wand to Bella again, I'd destroy him. This is the mark and I must keep my oath" Hermione said. The Weasleys stared at her in shock and Mrs. Weasley bustled over to her, to comfort her.

"You didn't mean to make the oath..." Mrs. Weasley started. Hermione looked up at her and flinched away from her hug.

"Oh. Yes I did. As I was saying, I came to keep my oath. I was going to kill him with my sword and it would've been perfectly legal since it was witnessed, sealed, and bound by three Dark houses. Just so happens that he destroyed himself. Ron told me he tried to Obliviate Bella and him and it backfired because of Ron's nasty faulty wand. Well, at least I won't have to murder as of yet" Hermione said, almost pleasantly. Fred and George shuddered at her tone and Ron and Bella couldn't help but snicker. Hermione was just playing with them...hopefully.

"As, I was saying, I turned around and there they stood. The family that I wanted from the Mirror of Erised. Well...not all of them. But that's besides the point" Bella started. Sirius looked at her, wide-eyed.

"You saw Lily and James?" he asked. She shook her head, solemnly.

"No. I saw Hermione, and some Italian man, and...a pale haired man. I held a connection with all of them. It was a very deep connection, especially with the pale-haired man. I don't think he's a man now because Hermione looked a lot older and they were all there in spirit. And no, don't get your knickers in a twist Uncle Padfoot. It wasn't a soulmate bond. I'm pretty sure I would've known. The Italian man had a wicked looking spear and the pale man had a scythe. He looked really sickly. The pale man I mean. The Italian man looked healthier than a horse. Ooh...Muggle saying!" Bella said, getting distracted. Tom rolled his eyes. She was delirious with exhaustion.

"Bella...Anastasia, continue" he said, as gently as possible. Apparently, it wasn't as gentle as he thought because Mrs. Weasley glared at him. He sneered at her. Damn blood traitor...

"Right, right. Thank you, Tommy!" Bella giggled. Tom stared at her in shock. The elder twins sniggered. Sirius choked on laughter. Hermione and Ron started coughing and even Dumbledore cracked a smile. The little twins were giggling softly but they still looked somber. Tom sent her a nasty glare but said nothing.

"So, Older Hermione blabbered on about devastating balance because he was threatening the personification of some mumbo jumbo crap and then Italian man said that a price must be paid then the pale haired man said a soul must be taken. I gave him the necklace and he took in a deep breath, sucking out the piece of soul from it. He devoured it and then gave a rattling laugh. It should've sounded horrible to me but it sounded comforting. He looked a lot healthier looking after. I think he feeds on it. Grindelwald sort of blew up then and the residue magic went back into Gideon and Ginny's bodies and formed a magical core. Their souls went back in. May I add, you two, that it is only residue magic. You're not going to be able to do some spells for a while since your core had to build up. Trust me, it happens. Anyway, they woke up and told me they opened the Library, which I already knew" Bella went on. Everyone nodded in understanding. Dumbledore frowned and Sirius seemed to understand as well. He called her on it.

"What happened to that family of yours?" asked Sirius. Bella tilted her head as she stared at him.

"They said some things before Gideon and Ginny woke up. I know I told you that I'd tell you the story as much as I possibly can but...that...that was personal" Bella said, quietly. Hermione looked at Bella, curiously.

"I really don't remember what the others said. I don't even truly remember their faces anymore. I passed out because I felt you calling me and I ended up there with them. You felt a blood bond though? Because I only felt a blood bond with Thanatos. Not Apollo" Hermione said. Bella nodded.

"I felt a blood bond. There was a blood bond between me and Apollo and Thanatos separately from yours too. But it's not fully formed, I think. I think it's the blood bound of our souls and not our physical bodies. We'll fix that once we remember who they are. Their faces are fuzzy now. That may be because I'm about to pass out but...yeah...anyway, Onnisciente rode us back and gave me one

wish that she'd do anything in its power to grant" Bella said. This caught everyone's interest. Including Dumbledore's.

"And what did you wish for my dear girl?" he asked, carefully. Bella grinned, cheekily.

"A Nimbus 2001."

Everyone stared at her in disbelief. Bella broke into laughter and shook her head before leaning her face into Sirius' side. She looked up, grinning.

"No! I was joking. I swear. But one would be nice, Uncle Sirius. I asked for it to seal away the Library forever" Bella said. Fred and George frowned at her.

"Why would you do that? There's so many things everyone could've learned" George said. Bella's grin faded until her face was the epitome of seriousness.

"Listen to me and listen well. No one and I mean no one deserves that type of knowledge. Because knowledge is a dangerous weapon. One that would destroy this world in seconds. In that Library, I lost all hope. I thought I was going to die. Out there in the real world...there is hunger, pain, death, and loss. But in that Library, I sealed away one thing...foreboding. And without it, we may not lose hope...good night" Bella said, before her world promptly turned black.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Sunday the 30th of May 1993

3:00 AM

Bella wandered downstairs in fresh pajamas and feeling as good as new. She had slept for an hour and a half in the hospital wing because of the bruises and cuts and burns but that had been dealt with swiftly. Lucius Malfoy had come to reinstate Dumbledore, rather shallowly and Bella was waiting to confront him. She wouldn't do it here since no one could find out but she would...

"Bella come on. I'm hungry" Ron complained. Bella snickered. Hermione slapped him in the arm and he yelped.

"Ronald, you're always hungry!" she snapped. He glared at her, rather disgruntled. They walked into the Great Hall together and Bella was met with cheers from everyone...except the Slytherins. Bella grinned and glanced at the Slytherins. Zabini and Malfoy were staring at her with unfathomable expressions and Malfoy even had a kind of sort of smile on his face. She winked at him and his lips curled into a sneer. Bella only laughed.

She turned to look at the Great Hall to see Dumbledore sitting in his normal chair and Tom staring at it disgruntled.

"Look at Marvolo. He's pissed because he can't sit in the chair anymore" Bella giggled. This caused Hermione and Ron to laugh with her as they sat down. Bella realized how hungry she really was and she attacked a rather large bowl of porridge that had just the right amount of sugar in it.

Hermione looked at her, disapprovingly but she didn't say anything as she delicately ate her eggs and bacon. Gideon and Ginny sat further down with their friends and they weren't speaking much. Hermione could only hope that everyone in that room that had heard what happened wouldn't say anything. The eleven-year-old twins had already been through enough.

Everyone was in his or her pajamas except for most of the faculty. Dumbledore donned a dressing robe and had a stuffed goat underneath his arm. Bella snickered into her porridge.

"Hey, Potter" a voice called. Bella turned around in her seat. She looked up at Justin Finch-Fletchley and Ernie MacMillan.

"Yes?" she said, coolly. Inwardly, Bella was smirking. They had come to apologize. She knew it!

"Er...um...we're really sorry for accusing you of setting all of the bad luck from the riddles on you. You wouldn't have stopped whoever that did it if you had" Justin said. Ernie still didn't look too convinced.

"How did you do it anyway?" he questioned. Bella looked at him with annoyed eyes before smiling, angelically at Justin. Justin blinked in

surprise and he gave a very light blush. Bella swallowed her snigger. Ernie cleared his throat in annoyance and she turned to him, her smile falling off her face.

"Look, I've been out all night, thwarting evil. If you don't believe me ask Dumbledore. I'm dead tired and I was burned, bruised, cut and almost destroyed. I'm really not in the mood. Yes, I may be a magical Heiress to Slytherin House. But that doesn't make me evil, just as Professor Riddle isn't evil" Bella said. For some reason, when she said that Tom wasn't evil, she felt like she was lying through her teeth. She disregarded the feeling.

"Fine, fine. We believe you. I'm sorry" Ernie sighed. Bella smiled and nodded.

"Yes, well. It's okay. And you're welcome" Bella said, shoveling another spoonful of porridge in her mouth. Hermione watched on with a mix of disgust and amusement. Mostly disgust. Bella was eating at the same rate as Ron.

"For what?" Justin asked. Bella looked up and wiped her mouth with her napkin.

"I didn't have to go kick ass down there. I could've answered the riddles and went on my merry way. But I didn't. I sealed the Library. For good. You're welcome" Bella said, cheekily. Justin and Ernie wandered away with shocked looks on their faces.

Hogwarts, Unplottable Location, Scotland, Great Britain

Saturday the 19th of June 1993

9:30 AM

"See you, Tom."

Tom smirked down at the girl. He was leaning against the doorframe of the door that led outside of Hogwarts. Bella had her trunk in hand and was gripping a crimson robe around her. She was grinning at him.

"So, you can finally say my name? Doesn't scare you, little girl?" Tom asked, curiously. Bella rolled her eyes in annoyance.

"I was never afraid to say your name. Fear of a name and all that stuff."

"No, I don't know what 'all that stuff' is. Care to recount the exact words that Dumbledore probably told you?" Tom asked, curiously. Bella grinned.

"How'd you know? See, great minds think alike. Or crazy ones at that" Bella teased. Tom mock glared at her and Bella snickered.

"Yeah, yeah. I get it. He said, 'Fear of a name only increases fear of the thing itself'. Pretty profound, I think. So no Tom. I'm not afraid. I never said your name because I respected you enough not to call you by your first name. You don't see me calling Dumbledore, 'Albus', or McGonagall, 'Minerva'" Bella pointed out. Tom raised an eyebrow.

"And what about me? Am I just Tom now?" he asked. Bella shook her head.

"No. You're still Marvolo Riddle. But you're now Tom Marvolo Riddle. And I've pretty much lost all respect for you" Bella added as an afterthought. Tom glared at her and grabbed her by her arm to put her in a chokehold.

"Why you little—" he started. He stopped abruptly and looked down at Bella. She was hugging him fiercely and he was starting to go blue.

"Can't...breathe..." he choked out. Bella let go of him quickly and gave a little laugh. He looked down at what had been the bane of his existence in such a long time. And how she had almost died because Gellert hadn't fucking listened to him.

"Er...sorry..." she said, rubbing the back of her head. Tom pinched the bridge of his nose.

"Don't hug me like that again. It was completely unexpected. And I don't do hugs...ever. So don't ever expect me to hug you back if you do hug me. Got it? Good. You need to catch your train" Tom

instructed. Bella nodded and looked around at Hogwarts one more time before she'd return to London.

"I'm going to miss it. But I'll see it again in just a little time, I suppose. Goodbye, Lady Hogwarts" Bella murmured. She felt the familiar magic wrap around her in what seemed to be a hug. She smiled and turned back to Tom.

"Goodbye, Tom."

"Goodbye, Anastasia."

"Who can't say my name now?"

"Shut up Bella before you miss your train."

Number 14, Grimmauld Place, London, England, Great Britain

Saturday the 19th of June 1993

11:00 PM

I'm still alive. You've helped me so much Tom. Thank you

Bella...don't write all grateful. I'm a bad person.

What do you mean? I don't understand...you've been helping me all this time. You couldn't possibly be a bad person...

Bella. My name is Tom Marvolo Riddle.

I kind of gathered that with the constant sarcasm. You're the impression or memory or whatever of the man who continuously saves my life. It's all good that you didn't tell me.

Do you not know what the real me did...when he was 16?

No...what?

I killed someone.

...what?

I killed someone. I opened the Chamber of Secrets and used the basilisk to kill someone.

Why are you telling me this?

I trust you and so does the real me.

I see...

He's going to be sentenced to Azkaban. You're going to tell.

Never on my life.

Why?

It doesn't matter. It was a long time ago and it's over and done with. No one can ever know.

Do you not think I'm evil?

I don't think I can. This must be one of your deepest darkest secrets. And...it doesn't matter to me. And it never will. Because even if the real you kill me...

I never would.

I'd still care for you.

...

A/N: And...SCENE! I love the ending. This so much fun to write and now, Bella's a year older and a year wiser. And she's turning thirteen...I started noticing guys when I was thirteen. Maybe Bella will too...

Interlude II

Malfoy Manor, Unplottable Location, England, Great Britain

Tuesday the 20th of July 1993

6:00 PM

"Draco...dear are you going to join us for dinner?" Narcissa Malfoy asked her son. Draco looked up from his perch near the fireplace in the library. His hand froze where it was and he stood up and stepped in front of his little project.

"No, Mother. I may be able to join you a little later but not at the present time" Draco said, rather formally. Narcissa frowned but didn't push her son. Lately, he'd been distant but that was only because he was a teenager. She remembered becoming distant from her parents around that time.

"That is acceptable. Your father will be in here later to speak to you" Narcissa said before sweeping out. Draco turned back to his little project and he surveyed the fearful rat.

"Come here" Draco commanded. The rat cringed back and started squeaking. Draco growled and swiped the rat from the ground and stuffed it into the pocket of his robes. His face showed disgust as he walked down the hallway and into the dungeons.

Draco made sure that no one, not even the house elves, would find him. He couldn't have that happening. No one could know about the unnatural gift he had had since he was six years old. And he was going to keep it that way.

As he walked into the dungeons and walked into a deserted cell, he smirked as he looked around. He knew exactly where he was. This was where they used to house the rebels from the Order of the Phoenix.

"Come out little rat" Draco coaxed in a delightfully cold voice. He smirked in victory as the rat slipped from his pocket into his hand. Draco squeezed lightly and a little giggle slipped from his lips when he heard the faint crack. He could feel the life leaving the vermin in

hand. The simple rat fell limp in his hands and Draco dropped it on the floor.

The Malfoy Heir moved his hand and the rat suddenly stood at attention. Draco sighed in ecstasy as he felt the familiar Dark magic rush through him. He waved his hand and the rat began marching around the room. Another giggle escaped Draco and he bit his lip.

Malfoys didn't giggle they cackled.

And so that was what Draco did. Lucius' eyes widened as he heard the wild and crazed cackling. The Lord Malfoy changed his course from the one to the dining room and he walked down the stone steps and into the dungeons.

He stopped in front of the cell his son was in and he watched as Draco directed the rat with one hand. In fascination, he almost took a step closer.

And he knew his son was going to be great. For he was the Claimer's Son.

Number 19, Privet Drive, Little Whinging, Surrey, England, Great Britain

Friday the 30th of July 1993

11:23 AM

"Mum!"

"Yes, Hermione, dear?" Maya Granger asked as she began to make lunch. Hermione rushed in with an envelope of parchment in hand and an owl flying after her. Maya couldn't help but laugh as she stared at the familiar snowy owl.

"Hedwig just brought this! It's from Bella. She wants to know if she could come over through the Floo, later" Hermione said, excitedly. Maya smiled at her daughter's enthusiasm. Bella was her best friend and they always had fun together. It might be good for Hermione to have a friend over.

But...

"Does she know about your...condition?" Maya asked. Hermione glanced at Maya and nodded, rubbing her arm. Maya's eyes narrowed in disapproval when she was reminded of the tattoo sitting on her daughter's arm.

"She knows. I told her. Ron and Professor Dumbledore know too. And so does my Head of House and Professor Riddle" Hermione said. Maya's cheeks held a light blush as she remembered the charming Professor Riddle. Hermione grinned, cheekily.

"Bella won't take too kindly to you blushing over Professor Riddle" Hermione said, as she sat down and helped herself to leftover bacon. Maya raised an eyebrow and looked over at the girl.

"And why is that? He is her...magical guardian, wasn't it?" Maya asked. Hermione tilted her head and she grinned.

"Yes but that...that expires once she's 17. We're legally adults at 17 and if I think about...I'd say that Bella's got a bit of a crush on Professor Riddle, and...and what makes it better is that she doesn't even know it!" Hermione laughed. Maya chuckled over the fact.

"I can see that. He's a...very attractive man. And quite charming as well" Maya said. Hermione nodded but very pouting her lips in thought.

"He's a bit of an arse, though" Hermione commented. Maya looked at her daughter, sternly, through her urge to burst into laughter.

"Language. So, what do others think of Professor Riddle?" Maya asked, genuinely curious about the mysterious Professor Riddle. Maya always heard about the other professors more than him and she wondered why.

"Well, Gideon Weasley, who has the biggest crush on Bella, used to hate him. But then he gave him ten points for embarrassing Bella. And all the girls think he's handsome. I guess I could see that. But no one's brave enough to actually speak to him or interrupt him when he's speaking. Except Bella. And I, on one occasion" Hermione said. Maya nodded in understanding.

"And that occasion would be the day that Bella got sick off of magic, you said?" Maya asked. Hermione nodded, confirming her mother's question.

"Yeah but, that year's over with and I hope this year will be calmer so I can just focus on my exams but...knowing Bella Potter and her 'luck', probably not."

...

A/N: So..here it is. I had a distinct problem before with uploading but one of my favorite authors showed me how to update again! YAY!

Chapter XIX

"Men are not prisoners of fate,
But only prisoners of their mind"

Franklin D. Roosevelt

Number 19, Privet Drive, Little Whinging, Surrey, England, Great Britain

Friday the 30th of July 1993

1:00 PM

"Wow! You're house is nice!"

"BELLA!" Hermione shouted, launching herself at the dusty girl. Bella grinned and hugged her sister back. She smirked as she noticed that she was less than an inch shorter than Hermione now.

"Hi !" Bella smiled. Maya waved at the girl in question. She turned back and looked curiously as the flames turned green again. A head appeared in the fire and Maya watched in fascination. Sirius Black looked up at Bella. Bella turned with wide eyes and she had a slight curl to her lip. Maya noticed how it made her look rather haughty.

"Yes, Uncle Sirius?" Bella asked. Sirius looked at her sternly, which Maya watched in surprise as Hermione and Bella laughed at.

"Be back by 8. If you're not, I'm sending that blasted Riddle after you and he'll chew you out so much, your ears will fall off" Sirius said. Bella snorted.

"You're going to sick Tom on me? I could take him any time. If I see him I'll ask him for my birthday gifts. Bye, Uncle Padfoot" Bella said. Sirius smirked and nodded to himself.

"Make them expensive. He'll get them for you anyway. Moron likes to show off about how much money he's got...one day you should just take it all. Have a good time and hello Mrs. Granger, Hermione. Goodbye!" Sirius said the three women waved before the flames

turned back to normal. Hermione dumped water on the fireplace, removing the fire.

"So...what are we going to do today?" asked Bella, breaking the silence. Hermione tilted her head in deep thought before tapping her chin.

"Maybe we could go into London. Mum, can we? We could see a movie in the cinema. We can go out to lunch in the Haven Alley. Mum can come too! It'd be great" Hermione smiled. Maya considered it and couldn't help but grin at her daughter and Bella's hopeful expressions.

"Well...sure! I'd love to see this...Haven Alley was it? What's there?" Maya asked. Hermione shrugged and pointed at Bella.

"I told her about it. Diagon Alley has all the shops. Haven Alley has the pureblood shops and stuff. I know there's a Pleasure Alley. Those are the clubs and stuff. Uncle Sirius has never let me go down there. But we've eaten at Haven Alley plenty of times. I'm of the 'Noble House of Black'. No one will bother you for being a Muggle. I promise. And if not...I'll just threaten them with the 'wrath of Slytherin'" Bella said, her voice turning raspy at the end. She grinned as Hermione broke into giggles.

"Ah, yes. Hermione told me. How long is your name? I can never remember but Hermione seems to" Maya said. Hermione sat up straight as Bella lazed back in the chair she had claimed.

"Bella Anastasia Slytherin Black Potter. My legal name would be much longer if I assumed all my Heir names. I'd prefer not to let people know. It'd be bragging and I could do with a lot less attention" Bella sighed. Hermione snorted and rolled her eyes.

"Understatement of the year. Before we leave, I'll show you around the neighborhood. Let's go...let me change my shirt" Hermione said, gesturing to her tank top and the scar. Bella winced and nodded before straightening her shirt. Hermione ran upstairs and Maya turned to Bella with a serious expression.

"Now, Bella. Tell me about Hermione at school" Maya said. Bella tilted her head and gave a smile.

"Hermione she's a nagging know-it-all but I love that about her. She always makes sure my head doesn't get too big and I do my homework. Sometimes, she's overbearing but that's just because she cares. She's serious about her studies and it seems like she just mothers everyone, and she's very protective of me. Almost as protective as Tom" Bella said. She didn't notice Hermione standing in the back, leaning on the doorframe.

"When did Professor Riddle become 'Tom'?" Hermione asked. Bella turned with a grin and tucked her dark hair behind her ear. Hermione noticed that it was smoother than usual and fell to her waist.

"Since I lost all respect for him. Or that's what I told him. He still calls me Anastasia though. I don't mind. So, are you going to show me around or what?" Bella asked. Hermione nodded and the two girls walked from the house, waving to Maya as they went.

"So, this is Privet Drive. I've lived here since I was 7. It's nice and quiet and I like it here. The only downer is..." Hermione said as they strolled down the block.

"If it isn't the know-it-all" a voice said. Hermione turned to see a weedy looking boy and two other large boys standing behind a blonde boy. Bella's eyes widened. The blonde boy looked the size of a baby walrus.

"At least I know something. You know nothing at all, Dursley" Hermione said, coolly. The weedy looking boy leered at the two girls.

"Well, Kitten has claws" he said. Bella crossed her arms and tilted her head.

"You think Kitten has claws? I'll show you a snake's fangs. Leave us alone" Bella said, quietly. Dursley turned on Bella and grinned.

"Piers, it seems Kitten's got a friend. Who are you, girl?" Dursley asked. Bella raised an eyebrow and then glared, fiercely. She crossed her arms and bared her teeth.

"Your worst nightmare" she hissed, dangerously. Dursley took a step back and his eyes widened. He squared his shoulders.

"What's a bunch of girls going to do to us?" the weedy boy asked. Bella got into a loose dueling stance before centering herself. She threw out with one hand, as if casting a spell. Instead, her fist connected with Dursley's fleshy stomach. Dursley gasped in pain and looked down, just for an uppercut to slam into his eye.

"What the hell?" the weedy boy got out in shock. He was too busy watching Bella slammed Dursley into the ground. Hermione delivered a spin kick to the weedy boy's middle, causing him to fall to the ground. Hermione stumbled back from the sheer momentum in the kick and looked genuinely surprised and pleased with herself.

Bella was a little more into her fighting. Hermione watched in fascination as the girl gracefully yet harshly dealt punishment to Dursley. Bella finished off the blows by thrusting her leg out straight into Dursley's chest, making him fall onto his back and let out a loud shout.

Bella turned as a door slammed open down the street and a blonde and horsey looking woman ran out.

"Duddy! My Dinky Duddydums!" she shouted. Bella snickered, loudly and the gang backed away as the woman rushed up.

"Mrs. Dursley! These girls beat me and Dudley up!" the weedy boy complained. The woman crouched next to her son and patted the weedy boy's leg.

"I know Piers, I know...Lily?" the woman asked as soon as she looked up at the two girls. Bella lifted an eyebrow as the woman suddenly stood up completely.

"That was my mother's name. Lily Potter. Know her?" Bella asked, pressing her lips together in amusement. The woman's eyes widened and she paled, rapidly.

"Your mother...was Lily Potter? Your mother...was my sister? You're Bella Potter?" the woman said. Bella's eyes widened as she realized who the woman was. Hermione raised an eyebrow in confusion. Bella groaned loudly.

"Oh don't tell me! You're Petunia Evans? God today was not a good day to swing by here! I should've just spent the day planning pranks.

Hermione...this is my Aunt Petunia" Bella sighed. Dudley and his gang gaped.

"Mummy...I mean, Mum, you never told me you had a sister" Dudley said. Petunia looked miffed. She shrugged and beckoned turned towards the gang.

"Dudley can't play today. I believe it is time I introduce my niece to him. Run along" Petunia said. The gang nodded, dutifully before walking off. Piers sauntered off after him. Petunia glared at Bella. Bella gave her a perfectly innocent look that Hermione knew to immediately distrust.

"Duddy, you didn't know because she was a freak. Everything about her was...freakish" Petunia said. Bella's lip curled into a malicious smirk.

"You mean magical? Because my mum was a witch? Well, guess what, my mum was a witch and she was a damned good one" Bella said. Petunia looked around and hushed Bella, violently before glancing at Hermione, worriedly.

"Oh don't worry. I'm a Muggleborn like your sister" Hermione said. Petunia gasped, scandalized and Hermione looked pleased at the distress she was calling the horsey woman.

"Mum, I don't understand. What's going? Why are they talking about witches and magic?" Dudley asked. Petunia hushed her son.

"You might as well come in, girl. And you might as well bring your friend, too" she spat. Bella grinned and followed the woman and her son up the street with Hermione next to her.

"I've just found a magic-hater. I bet Tom would murder her if she ever called him a freak" Bella commented. Hermione glanced at her best friend with a slight grin on her face. Bella looked at her confused.

"Someone fancies Riddle" Hermione said in a sing-song way. Bella rolled her eyes and crossed her arms.

"Screw you Mione. No one fancies anyone. Now, come on. If we walk any slower, it'll be my birthday until we get to this woman's

house" Bella said. They crossed the threshold of the house and walked into a gleaming kitchen. Petunia sat her son down before turning to the two girls who sat down, quickly.

"Now, Dudders, I'd like to tell you that there is magic and witches and wizards. And I am one of them. Your mother's jealous of my mum because she's a witch" Bella summed up nicely. Dudley glared at her before looking at his mother's sour face in shock.

"She's lying! Right, Mum? She must be lying. You and Dad always say magic isn't real. It isn't...is it?" Dudley asked, confusedly. Hermione flicked her wrist and her wand fell from her sleeve and into her hand. Dudley gasped. Petunia reeled back from the offending object.

"Oh, yes it is. I'd do magic but I'd get in trouble. You wished to speak with Bella. We've got stuff to do and her sugar daddy's going to come and find you and kill you" Hermione said with a straight face. Dudley and Petunia's eyes went wide. Petunia eyed Bella with disgust. Bella glared at her best friend.

"Tom is my teacher and my guardian. Nothing more and nothing less stop being annoying. I'm probably related to him. Even if I can access to his bank accounts it's because I'm his Heir, dimwit" Bella snapped. Petunia looked slightly relieved at Bella's proclamation.

"I've brought you here to tell you that you're not to come anywhere near my family ever again!" Petunia shouted, suddenly. Bella turned a bored gaze onto Petunia. She looked at her with disdain and her eyes bled crimson as the locket around her neck suddenly felt heavy.

"Why would I want to talk to filthy Muggles like you?" she spat in a voice not all her own. Hermione's eyes widened and she gazed at Bella, uncertainly. Bella seemed to sense it and turned to Hermione with a slight smile.

"Oh not you, darling. Never you, my sister, nor your mother or your father. They were strong willed enough to birth a magical child. But all other Muggles are slime under my boot. That includes you, Petunia Dursley."

Haven Alley, London, England, Great Britain

Friday the 30th of July 1993

2:45 PM

"Bellissima."

Hermione didn't bother turning around. Bella snorted and Maya seemed to understand that the call was directed at her daughter. Her lips curled into a smile as Hermione turned around sharply. She was finally going to see her daughter in action. In her element.

"Zabini."

"Oh, don't be so cold. That's no way to speak to a friend. No way to speak to a very good friend at that" Zabini said, with a slight and teasing grin. Maya couldn't help but notice that he was good-looking for a thirteen-year-old boy. And he knew it well.

"You're no friend of mine. I thought I told you to leave me alone," Hermione spat. Maya's eyes widened at her daughter's cold behavior. Hermione never acted that way and it was a surprise to Maya that the two other students acted as if it were normal. Hermione channeled her disorder and actually used it.

"I don't believe that's what you said. You said 'what would you want with a poor little Mudblood like me?' Those words ring a bell?" Zabini said, mimicking her voice, perfectly. Bella laughed, quietly. Maya noted that this laugh was different from her normal and happy laugh. It was a hiss. It was high and cold and very unpleasant sounding.

"You're pathetic aren't you, Zabini? Where's Dragon? He must be around somewhere. I so wished to see how the Mummy's little lizard was doing" Bella said. Zabini waved his hand, vaguely behind him at one of the expensive stores.

"I don't see why it matters. I repeat, you're adorable, Princess. Once again, as a little sister. Nothing more."

"Call me 'Princess' one more time and I'll castrate you" Bella snapped. Zabini smirked as he felt a familiar presence.

"Well if it isn't Princess Potter and her Mudblood lady-in-waiting" Maya heard a voice drawl rather snottily. Bella growled and Hermione turned appraising eyes on the white blonde headed boy.

"Mudblood and proud of it, Malfoy. Never forget that. I'm Hogwarts' resident Mudblood and it's going to stay that way" Hermione said, haughtily. Malfoy looked half amused and half disgusted with her daughter. It unsettled Maya to know that someone looked at her beloved daughter with such intense dislike, bordering on hatred.

"It doesn't seem like you understand what a Mudblood is. Dirty blood, Disgusting blood. Blood of mud. You're not fit to be a witch" Malfoy spat. Zabini, Bella, and Hermione froze. Maya was suddenly angry. No one spoke to her child like that.

"Excuse me, young man, but I don't think you have any right—" Maya started. Bella had already grabbed Malfoy by his wrists and was leaning in with her other hand at his jugular, her wand poking into it.

"Would you like to challenge me, right here, Thanatos? That could be arranged. How dare you? Apologize! Or by Merlin, I will kill you. I will smite you where you stand" Bella threatened. Malfoy looked at her, defiantly.

"What will you do, Anastasia? Will you sic your precious Riddle on me? Well, he's not bloody here right now. So, answer me! What will you do?" he retorted. He was baiting her and Maya didn't know what to do. Even more so that they were addressing each other by different names.

"I don't bloody need him right now! I could kill you right here, myself. I know the words" Bella snapped. Malfoy glared at her before sticking his nose up, just as rebellious as before. His eyes weren't grey anymore. They were a frozen steel color. Maya watched as Hermione's eyes darkened. Bella's turned to a sickly green color. Zabini's eyes lightened from hazel to a molten gold.

"Then do it. Kill me. Or is Anastasia too scared? She always has someone fight for her. Mórrígan took the scar for you. Apollo's been watching over you since we first step foot in the damn school. And me" Malfoy started. Zabini looked stricken. Hermione, her precious daughter, looked upset. But Bella...Bella looked distraught.

Maya didn't understand. They had seemed like enemies at first. But then...now everything was twisted and very weird.

"S-stop" Bella whispered, her voice twisted in anguish. Malfoy laughed, heartlessly.

"You've got nobody to protect you from the truth. I'm not going to tell the truth, nicely, like Riddle. I'm going to tell you straight out. I devoured a torn soul for you. Do you know how sick that twisted piece of magic made me? You have everyone else taking care of you because you won't grow up! You always jumped headfirst into things. You're turning into a Gryffindor, Anastasia! It's absolutely disgusting. You are disgusting. You don't deserve to be the leader, any longer. You're a nonentity, Anastasia Slytherin. You're zero. You're a no-name. You're NOTHING!" Malfoy shouted at her, his face flushed in anger. Everyone in the alley turned to stare at the two teens.

"Thanatos!" Zabini shouted. Bella was shaking and she lowered her wand.

"No...no he's right. I'm...I'm nothing. I'm not fit to be Victory. Not when I haven't won anything" Bella muttered to herself. Hermione and Maya watched wide-eyed as Bella held out her wand at arms length and began sinking to her knees in an act of submission. Hermione darted forward and grabbed Bella by her arm and yanked her up.

"That is enough! Do you want Riddle here? He knows when Anastasia's upset. You don't think just as much as Anastasia. Enough is enough" Hermione snapped. Malfoy pulled back and blinked and his eyes turning back to its normal grey. Hermione's eyes lightened to chocolate. Bella's eyes lost the sickly look. Zabini's eyes returned to hazel. They blinked in confusion.

"Er...what happened?" Bella murmured. Zabini seemed to understand what had happened but the other three looked around confused. Malfoy jerked back from his close proximity with Hermione.

"Eww...Mudblood."

"Shut it, you little ponce."

"Blaise, Draco, I've been looking all over for you" a woman said. Maya turned from the confusing scene to see a beautiful Mediterranean woman. She was obviously Zabini's mother.

"Mother I was just having a chat with a few schoolmates. This is Bella Potter...and her friend, Hermione Granger" Zabini said, introducing Hermione rather reluctantly. Maya raised an eyebrow. The boy had been intent on flirting with his daughter in front of her but couldn't introduce Hermione to his mother.

"Ah, Bella Potter. The Girl-Who-Lived. The Slytherin Heiress. The Golden Girl. What a pleasure it is to meet you?" Mrs. Zabini said, nastily. She was beautiful. Long dark hair spilled over her shoulders and she had unmarred and tan skin.

"I'm no one's Golden Girl" Bella said, quietly. Maya watched as Malfoy unconsciously positioned himself into a protecting stance in front of Bella.

"Ah. And...Hermione Granger was it? I've never heard of that name. You are not pureblood. Maybe, half-blood?" Mrs. Zabini said. Zabini's eyes widened as he saw what his mother was getting at.

"It doesn't matter, Mother. Let's just leave. Draco must...finish his summer work" Zabini said, quickly. Malfoy, Bella, and Hermione glanced at the boy in surprise. Draco looked more outraged than surprised.

"Hey, I fin—ow!" he shouted. Bella had stomped on his foot and he glared down at the smaller girl. She gave him a cheeky smirk. Mrs. Zabini's eyes narrowed in suspicion. Her eyes went to Maya. Maya had to stop herself from taking a step back from the penetrating gaze that the woman gave her.

"You must be the girl's mother. Are you a witch?" Mrs. Zabini asked. Maya opened her mouth and closed it. She felt like a fish.

"Er...no. That...that would be her father" Maya lied. Mrs. Zabini nodded before turning on Hermione who had looked at her mother in surprise.

"Mum...you didn't have to lie and neither did you, Zabini. Mrs. Zabini, I am a Mudblood. I am proud of being a Mudblood and I'm sure you're proud for being half-veela. Isn't that correct?" countered Hermione. Mrs. Zabini's eyes widened and Malfoy snorted in amusement.

"I...I beg your pardon? I don't have any disgusting creature blood in my bloodline! Leave that to the French. If you will excuse me Mudblood. Draco! Blaise, let's go!" Mrs. Zabini said. Maya watched as the boy's mother walked off, briskly into another shop. She didn't even check if the two boys were behind her. Zabini whispered something in Malfoy's ear before poking him in the back.

"Er...what I said before. You're...you don't have both wands so you couldn't exactly do much. So...yeah" Malfoy said, reluctantly. Bella smirked.

"Is the Dragon apologizing? Oh Merlin! Call the Daily Prophet!" Bella teased. Malfoy sneered at the girl before turning away, arrogantly.

"Malfoys don't apologize, Princess. Now, I'm leaving before your sugar daddy shows up" Malfoy snipped at her. Bella glared at him.

"Listen up, Malfoy! I get stuff from Riddle because I fucking deserve it. You're such a git!" Bella hissed. Malfoy smirked.

"I never said it was Riddle. I could've been talking about Black."

"Would you shut up? I suppose I should thank you, Zabini. You lied to your mother. Doesn't mean I liked it. I'm proud that I'm a Mudblood and I'll announce it to any pureblood here that has a stick up their arse like your mother" Hermione said. Maya fought the urge to remind her about her language. Zabini shrugged.

"Just showing some citizenship. Come on, Draco. Before my mum starts throwing fireballs" Zabini said. Bella grinned.

"So she is a veela! I can't wait to tell Uncle Sirius!" Bella said, pumping her fist up. Malfoy rolled his eyes before the two walked away together. Maya couldn't help but notice that Bella now seemed lost without the two with her.

Divine Garden, Haven Alley, London, England, Great Britain

Friday the 30th of July 1993

3:10 PM

"Table for three" Bella said before Maya could even talk. Maya watched as Bella suddenly looked arrogant as the man in front of her peered down at her. Bella had smoothed her hair over her bangs.

"And whom is asking, little girl?" he asked. Bella looked up at him with piercing green eyes and his eyes widened in recognition.

"The future Lady Black."

"Right this way, Miss Potter" he said, quickly. He rushed them to the nicest table he could find. It was outside in a beautiful garden, right underneath a large tree that seemed to be growing solid gold pears. As soon as he presented them with the menus, he was off.

"So...who were those two boys? Do you fancy them? The two best friends fancy two other best friends?" asked Maya. Bella looked up sharply and gagged. Hermione bit her lip and a blush appeared on her lips.

"Me? Like Draco? That'd be like...incest. We're not close but it feels like we're brother and sister. Though we absolutely despise each other. Zabini fancies Hermione, I think. Even if he is a narcissistic little prat" Bella said, smirking. Hermione bit her lip and looked down at the menu before looking at Bella.

"Are you paying?" she asked. Maya shook her head but once again Bella interrupted her.

"Yes, I'll pay and Mrs. Granger, don't even try. I've got enough money as it is. Uncle Sirius won't notice a couple of galleons missing. Order anything you like. Black tea, please sugar and cream on the side" Bella said to the menu. The refreshment appeared in front of her. Maya looked in shock.

"Mum, try the butterbeer" Hermione dictated. Maya followed her example and her eyes widened when she took in the drink that

popped up there. Bella placed a lump of sugar in her tea before taking a sip. She gagged.

"Merlin! This is disgusting. Oh, well. Mrs. Granger, maybe we can go visit my vault at Gringotts after. Hermione can take out a few more books. You know...I might as well make her another key so she can just come and go. Are you all right about that?" Bella asked. Maya shrugged as Hermione nodded, enthusiastically. Seeing her Hermione different from how she was about 20 minutes ago.

"Hermione, do you act that way at school? How you did in the Alley? You disrespected an adult and you used profanity like it was nothing. You would have never done that before. Could you explain that to me?" Maya asked, patiently. Hermione froze and looked down at her menu.

"Steak-and-kidney pie and mashed potatoes" Hermione dictated. It appeared in front of her and she glanced up at her mother.

"At Hogwarts, there is a hierarchy" Bella started, to explain. Hermione nodded in agreement.

"There are four houses and Gryffindors and Slytherins are always fighting to be on top. Most Slytherins hate me because I took down their precious Grindelwald and...his Heir hasn't been seen in a long time. There is also the problem of blood status—" Bella continued. Hermione interrupted her.

"What do you mean Grindelwald's Heir? He had an Heir?" demanded Hermione. Bella bit her lip and glanced at Hermione.

"His name was Voldemort. Grindelwald was supposedly the power and Voldemort the charisma. But everyone knew that wasn't the case. Voldemort was Dark, Hermione. So very Dark he had more power than anyone the battlefield. That's what Uncle Sirius said. He was on par with Dumbledore and Grindelwald and supposedly feared nothing. Sometimes he even took to hand to hand combat. Most of Grindelwald's followers were really Voldemort's followers. After Grindelwald...died...his Heir to just...disappeared. No one knows what happened to him" Bella explained. Maya nodded and Hermione bit her lip before looking around the garden once again.

"Please continue explaining about...blood status" Maya requested. Bella cleared her throat to begin.

"ESCAPE! THEY'VE ESCAPED FROM AZAKBAN!"

As soon as the shout was out people screamed and the host from before ran into the garden with a panicked look. Bella stood up with wide eyes.

"What? What is it?" she asked, quickly.

"The Lestranges...all three of them escaped! They've escaped Azkaban. With...with...Peter Pettigrew" he stuttered before he fainted.

Bella willed her eyes not to roll into the back of her head.

"He's free. The traitor is free..."

Leaky Cauldron, London, England, Great Britain

Friday the 30th of July 1993

3:17 PM

Tom Marvolo Riddle looked around with a stoic expression at the panicking crowd. The Lestranges, some of his most loyal followers, and Pettigrew, the traitor was free. And they were looking for him and Bella Potter.

"Merlin!"

"Let's go home, darling! It's not safe."

"Maya, Hermione, come on!"

Tom turned at this voice. He watched in worry as Bella Potter pushed forward towards the Floo. She looked absolutely terrified even though her voice had been steady. Someone pushed past her as she just about passed him, not even seeing him and she tripped forward on another person. Tom was the unfortunate person she fell on.

"Oh Lord! I'm so sorry..." Bella said, loudly. Tom blinked and looked at the girl who had pushed him over. She was kneeling by his side. She hadn't even looked at him.

"I don't accept your apology, brat" Tom snapped. Bella looked up and hugged him, tightly. He lay there stiffly and glanced at Hermione who was standing there amused and Mrs. Granger who was watching curiously.

Maya watched with open curiosity. If memory served correct, this was the infamous Professor Riddle. He looked rather annoyed with lying on the ground as Bella hugged him. He also looked very awkward, which amused Maya quite a bit.

"May I get up now, Anastasia?" Professor Riddle asked, carefully. Bella let go of him as if she had been shocked and snickered, despite the situation.

"Sorry. I...I got to make sure Uncle Sirius is still at home. He's going to go after Pettigrew. I know it. Please...please help me" Bella pleaded. Professor Riddle glanced at her with an unfathomable expression. Maya fully expected him to deny her.

"Why should I help you? Do you wish to bargain with Lord Slytherin?" Riddle said, carefully. Maya's eyes widened. He was going to bargain with a child? A child that wasn't even thirteen yet, even if her birthday was the next day.

"Anything. I'll do anything" Bella swore. Riddle smirked and stood fluidly before turning to Maya and Hermione.

"I'll tell you the terms as soon as we get to your mongrel godfather. Mrs. Granger, Miss Granger, would you like to accompany us to Grimmauld Place?" Riddle asked. Maya nodded and Bella grabbed Hermione's arm and Hermione grabbed onto her mother.

Suddenly, everything around Maya was dark and she felt like she was being squeezed through a tube. It wasn't incredibly painful but it wasn't the most comfortable situation to be in. Suddenly, there was bright light that was almost painful to her eyes and she glanced around.

She was in a dining room with a long ebony table. There was a fireplace behind the head of the table. Bella was walking around, quickly and Riddle had sat down on a chair, unconcerned and a book in hand.

"Uncle Sirius! Uncle Sirius! UNCLE SIRIUS!" Bella shrieked. There was the pounding of feet on stairs and suddenly, Sirius Black burst into the room. He was looking around frantically before he sighed in relief and wrapped his arms around Bella, tightly.

"Uncle Sirius...I was so scared. I was so scared that you went after him. You can't. Bellatrix will kill you" Bella muttered in his chest. Sirius pulled away from her and frowned.

"It seems your own surrogate daughter doesn't trust you to be impulsive, Black. not a surprise" Professor Riddle said, easily. Maya's eyes widened at the baiting and how easily it seemed to come to him. He was manipulating Sirius into fighting against him. Maya could see what he was doing.

"What are you doing my house, Riddle?" Sirius spat. Bella sighed and almost face palmed. Maya watched as Hermione snickered.

"I transported Anastasia back here instead of leaving her to die because of the Lestranges and Pettigrew. I sensed her distress. You should be thanking me" Riddle said, smugly. He was smug because he had been able to help Bella and Sirius couldn't. Maya didn't know if the two teenagers could see it but she certainly could.

The two men were fighting over Bella. They wanted to be the sole guardian over her but they didn't have the guts to just out and say it.

"Yeah, thanks. How did you sense her distress I wonder?" Sirius asked.

The question had seemed simple but Maya knew that it had cause Riddle distress. He had shifted in his seat. Even if Maya was just a Muggle, as a dentist she need to see if a patient was in pain or anxious. Riddle didn't seem that at all. He just seemed...cautious.

"Twin cores I'm assuming that after three years, Ollivander's advanced explanation finally made sense. You definitely haven't inherited any Slytherin cunning from either of your parents" Riddle

said, coldly. Sirius glared at him and Bella sighed before turning to Maya and Hermione.

"This should be stopped. But it's entirely too amusing..." Bella smirked. Maya and Hermione giggled.

"Shut up, Riddle. You probably knew my parents!" Sirius snapped. This really caused everyone to freeze and Bella whimpered in fear for her godfather. Maya's mind was whirling. But Professor Riddle looked so young...younger than her! Only about 26! And Sirius looked around 34...wouldn't Riddle be younger?

"What are you insinuating?"

The tone it was asked in sent chills down Maya's spine. Professor Riddle's eyes were crimson now and he was glaring Sirius down. She was surprised that Sirius wasn't backing down. Maybe it was that Gryffindor courage Hermione was always telling her about.

"You probably knew my parents. You're pretty old 66, going by what Bella's told me. You Are An. Old Man" Sirius said carefully, as if speaking to a child. Suddenly, Riddle's wand was in hand and he was flicking it. Sirius was sent flying back into the table and Riddle's wand was pointed in between his eyes.

"Listen up, Black. I hope your pea-sized Gryffindor brain can understand this because if it doesn't, I'll be sent to Azkaban. Under no circumstances are you allowed to bring up my age orever call me old. Dumbledore is old. Nicholas Flamel is old. Grindelwald is old. I. AM. NOT. OLD!" Riddle raged. Sirius grinned and glared at the man, apparently not getting it.

"You're old."

"Sectu—" Riddle got out. Suddenly, Bella was between them, her arms out towards both men and she looked rather annoyed. Maya watched in amusement. Hermione was giggling.

"They've never got into a physical altercation. But it was bound to happen...especially with what he said" Hermione said. Maya looked at her daughter in confusion.

"What do you mean? It's just age and he looks...fit for his age" Maya said. As the words left her mouth, Riddle looked at her and shot her a smug smile. Maya looked down and flushed.

"Thank you for the compliment, Mrs. Granger. Someone appreciates my attractiveness" Riddle said, charmingly. Maya flushed even more. Hermione snickered. Bella smirked. She grabbed Riddle by the arm and pushed him back into his chair. She sat down on the arm of his chair.

"A lot of people appreciate that. You have several fans in my year. Oh, yeah. Look out for love potions in the next four years. Lavender Brown and Parvarti Patil,...scary. Well, that's beside the point. I can see what's behind the quote 'devilishly attractive' unquote façade" Bella said. Sirius was watching with narrowed eyes and he looked awfully suspicious. Riddle looked at her with a raised eyebrow.

"And what is that, little girl?" he challenged.

"An annoying, pompous, self-righteous, slimy, and bitter Slytherin" Bella teased. Riddle glared at her and stood up as Sirius snorted and the suspicion slid off almost completely. But his eyes were still locked on Bella who had burst out laughing and fell into the seat Riddle had previously occupied.

"Little brat. I think it's time I take my leave. Maybe, you should tell your husband where you are Mrs. Granger. It wouldn't be prudent to leave now" Riddle said, coldly.

"He's on a business trip" Hermione said. Bella had stopped laughing. She was watching Riddle, curiously. Maya confirmed Hermione's statement.

"Very well. I'll take my leave. Goodbye" Riddle said, just as coolly as before. He didn't storm out but he walked out rather stiffly. Bella groaned and stood up.

"I've done it now he just takes everything so damn personal" Bella muttered before running after the man.

Sirius stood as well and slid off the table. He definitely looked suspicious again.

"I think...I think I'm going to go spy. For Bella's own good" he decided. Maya and Hermione exchanged looks.

"I...I think I will too!" Hermione decided.

"I second...or third that" Maya smiled. Sirius gave her a slight grin and Maya couldn't help but blush and look away...

Number 12, Grimmauld Place, London, England, Great Britain

Friday the 30th of July 1993

3:50 PM

"You know I'm sorry" Bella said, earnestly. She was holding Tom by the hand and looking up at him with honest eyes. He hadn't even turned to look at her and he was still staring at the door.

"I don't forgive. You were extremely rude" Tom said, coldly. Bella glared at him and crossed her arms.

"And you were being arrogant and just plain mean to my uncle. You were just as rude. This is my home and that is my only family. And you had the damn nerve to come in here and threaten him with your wand? Really, Tom? Really?" Bella snapped. Tom glared at her.

"Don't speak to me that way, child. I may do what I want when I want. Who are you, a child, to tell me what to do as if you were my mother?" he demanded. Bella crossed her arms.

"Well, you obviously need someone to teach you some Goddamn manners! I may be a child but I've got ten times the manners you do. Merlin, you're such a git!" Bella snapped. Sirius watched from the crack in the door wide-eyed and tried not to gasp. Bella never yelled at her precious Riddle.

"Excuse me? He made a crack about my age!"

"And so do I! It's a number, Tom! Everyone grows old! It's how humans work! Deal with it!" Bella shrieked, sounding hysterical. Tom had suddenly turned around and glared at her with crimson eyes. Bella looked just as angry.

"I don't. I refuse to grow older. I am truly undying" he murmured, almost to himself. Bella growled under her breath.

"You're just afraid! You're frightened. And because someone pointed out that the 'great' Tom Riddle is afraid you're angry!" Bella snapped. Tom hissed at her before pulling away and walking towards the door. He flung it open so hard the curtains to Walburga's portrait flew open. Walburga didn't even start screaming. She just stared.

"Leave! GET OUT! AND DON'T BOTHER COMING BACK! Don't come back tomorrow! I fucking hate you! Just fucking LEAVE! LEAVE ME ALONE!" Bella screamed. Tom glared at her but didn't say anything. He turned and flicked his wand once. He stormed out of the door, slamming it so hard that the doorframe and that wall of the house shook, violently.

Bella turned around with a stony expression and threw open the door. Hermione, Maya, and Sirius backed away with shocked expressions.

"Hope you enjoyed the show."

Number 12, Grimmauld Place, London, England, Great Britain

Saturday the 31st of July 1993

1:06 AM

Hermione crept out of the room she shared with her mother as she felt inside someone crying. As she got to a door, she cracked it open and she could hear the quiet sobs. Hermione walked inside and looked down at the bed. Bella was curled up in it, her black hair spread across the bed. Hermione slid into bed next to her and Bella turned into her.

"Shh...shh, Bella. It's okay" Hermione murmured. Bella quieted her sobs and fell into a deep and slightly troubled sleep.

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A/N: This chapter is sad. Well, the last part. Tom and Bella won't be making up any time soon. Just want to give you a heads up. And DADA classes will be tense and full of snarks and snipes.

Next Chapter: Birthday wishes

Chp23